OF COURSE IT'S NOT ANOTHER VIETNAM — THIS IS COLOMBIA (SEE PAGE 10)

COMMEMORATOR

Published by the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party

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Courtesy of David Hilliard

Gene A. McKinney, 1968

Unsung Hero Dies

In Memoriam: Gene Allen McKinney

June 4, 1942 - September 13, 2000

By Melvin Dickson

"Let us go on outdoing ourselves; a revolutionary man always transcends himself or otherwise he is not a revolutionary man, so we always do what we ask of ourselves or more than what we know we can do."

— Dr. Huey P. Newton
Revolutionary Suicide

Gene Allen McKinney, the former Black Panther Party stalwart who leaves the legacy of a revolutionary act in the crucible of the fight, died on September 13, 2000 at the age of 58. Over one hundred family members and friends attended his memorial service held September 25 at deFremery Park in Oakland, California.

Gene, loved by family and friends in both life and death, joined the Black Panther Party at its beginning. He grew up in West Oakland in the same oppressed, black community as did Panther leaders Dr. Huey P. Newton, David Hilliard, Bobby Seale, and Li'l Bobby Hutton. He had known Huey since grammar school and attended McClymonds High School. Gene was a member of Local 342, Plumbers and Steamfitters Union. Among his comrades, Gene is best known for his courageous stand for the cause of freedom against

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Commemorator photo

Relatives and friends attend memorial services for Black Panther Party stalwart, Gene Allen McKinney held September 25, 2000 at deFremery Park in Oakland, CA.

Caging California's Children

Campaign Grows Against Prison Labor Programs

Commemorator photo

Edget Betru of Oakland, California at a racial profiling rally in Sacramento, CA, April 27, 2000. Betru, wearing a "No Prop 21" T-shirt, told* The Commemorator *that young people are looking for ways to "turn this thing around."

By Commemorator Staff

Melvin Dickson, Chairman of the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP), has dedicated CCBPP's 2001 Black History Month efforts to exposing the fallacy that allowed passage of the "Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act," or Proposition 21, on March 7, 2000. Promoted as an anti-gang law, Prop. 21 sanctions the arrest, trial, imprisonment and execution of 14 to 18-year-olds as adults.

"Proposition 21 is the most sweeping of a series of laws specifically targeting poor and minority youth for imprisonment," announced Dickson at a CCBPP weekly staff meeting in Berkeley. "Proposition 21 condemns underrepresented poor minorities for the conditions under which they live, for the purpose of putting them to work for profit."

At anti-Proposition 21 demonstrations and conferences throughout the past year, thousands of California

Commemorator photo

Cindy Wiesmer speaks before a crowd of Bay Area youth assembled at a "No on Prop 21" rally in downtown Oakland on February 21, 2000.

youth have made clear their intent to end the prison slave labor system and to repeal mandatory sentencing and other laws that feed it such as Proposition 21.

On June 17, 2000, for example, hundreds of Bay Area youth attended the second annual Tupac Shakur Conference at Fremont High School in east Oakland, California which focused on building the fight to repeal Proposition 21 and abolish the prison industrial complex while informing youth of their civil and constitutional rights in regard to the law which went into effect April 9, 2000.

Slave labor, No. People power, Yes.

"This country was built on slave labor. Proposition 21 is the same game with a new name," stated JR Valrey, Jr. of One Nation Committee, one of several organizations that have declared Proposition 21 to be in violation of the California constitution. "We have to look for new and innovative ways to address needs in young peoples' lives."

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Editorial

Children and Poverty:

What We Must Know and Do to End Conditions of Genocide

We live in a nation that allows one out of four children to go to bed hungry every night (one out of three in the overwhelmingly poor and minority ghetto areas). We live in a nation in which the only so-called "entitlement" in the realm of so-called "social services" is foster care, under a policy that promotes the theft of children from their parents by government agencies and poverty pimps on the grounds parents can't provide for them. The children, whose only crime is to be poor, are turned over to individuals and institutions which make money from their suffering. Foster care providers receive a fixed amount per child from the state in a scenario where the less money the foster care provider spends on the health and well-being of the foster child, the more money they have for themselves.

Simultaneously, thousands of poor and minority children are being targeted to bear the full weight of our "injustice" system across the nation, and are being tried, sentenced and executed as adults. Youth are being condemned to 25 years-to-life as a source of prison slave labor. Most do not ever get out of this system. Those that do manage to get out of prison usually cannot find a job that pays enough to live on and are forced, through poverty, back into prison.

Thus, young people, in the prime of life, are being removed from their families and from the ability to provide needed income for their households, and are forced to work for pennies an hour in the course of replacing unionized or higher-paid government workers. *And it's all "legal."* Replacement of social welfare with workfare, combined with development and expansion of prison industries, has left many families without hope.

With this lack of hope for their children's future growing among low-income and minority families, the federal government has set a goal of doubling adoptions and permanent placements by the year 2002, by providing financial incentives for states to move children more quickly from foster care to adoption. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reported that, as a result of new federal regulations under the Adoptions and Safe Families Act (ASFA), 36,000 foster care children were adopted in fiscal year 1998, an increase from 31,000 in 1997 and 28,000 in 1996.

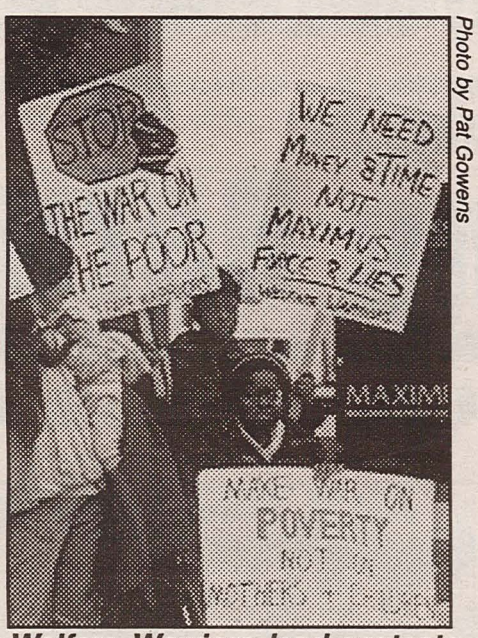

Photo by Pat Gowens

Welfare Warriors lead protests against Wisconsin's workfare program, where welfare workers are forced to work at poverty wages with no child care or benefits.

The financial incentives for states to increase adoptions have increased the level of funding from the federal government to the states which the states, in turn, disburse to county social service agencies, such as Child Protective Services (CPS). Foster homes and adoption programs, as well as many foster and adoptive parents, are motivated by these financial incentives and promote "kinder and gentler" social service institutions and policies that enhance their own self-perpetuation and profit.

In Stockton, California, Rondell Erby, the father of two children, 5 year-old Ronisha and 3 year-old Rondell Jr., is fighting California's Child Protective Services (CPS) for custody of his children. "CPS took the children from their mother in 1997 and found her to be unfit," Mr. Erby told *The Commemorator*. "After taking custody of the children CPS told me that I could not have custody because I was seeing the mother and that she was an unfit parent, a drug user." At the time, according to Erby, he and the children's mother were separated. The children's grandmother passed away shortly afterwards. Their mother lived in Sacramento, California while he lived in Stockton. He took one of the kids to visit the mother, who was grieving at the loss of her own mother. "Even though we were not in any type of physical relationship any more, she is the mother of my children, and I help her on that basis," said Erby. "CPS incorrectly claimed ... I was in violation of some law. I think they are just set on not giving me possession of my children. I'm a parent and want to continue to be a parent to them, but they don't care," stated Erby. CPS continues to deny Erby the right to care for his children, even though he has a stable life living in Stockton with his extended family.

California Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA): $20 Billion Plus Bonuses

Two years ago, California's then-Governor Pete Wilson declared that families who cannot afford to properly raise their children should give their children to the state to place in foster care. This option — giving them to families subsidized by the state to raise other peoples' children — was attractive to Governor Wilson because foster "families" are entitled to federal subsidies for the children, while subsidizing single mothers for care of their own children takes money from state coffers.

"Throughout history there has been a swing like a pendulum, back and forth, between family preservation and getting youth into an adoptive situation. Right now we are seeing a swing towards taking away parental rights as an answer to this problem," admits Deanne Pearn, program coordinator at Oakland, California's First Place Fund for Youth that provides limited services to foster youth who have "aged out" of Alameda County's foster program.

The California Department of Social Services promulgated lofty goals in its April, 2000 Western Regional Program Guide for a conference held in Los Angeles, "to ensure that needy and vulnerable children and adults are served, aided and protected in ways that strengthen and preserve families, encourage personal responsibility and foster independence."

"CPS is given priority," stated Raymond Lankford, a San Francisco social worker. "They claim to protect children from abusive family situations.

Continued on page 21

Opinions and positions taken in articles with bylines are those of their writer. The views expressed in the bylined editorial and opinion piece published by The Commemorator *do not necessarily indicate its endorsement or support. — The Editor*

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"SERVING ALL OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES"

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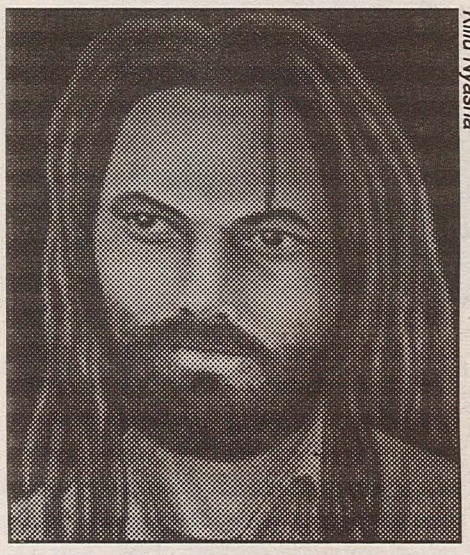
"Free Mumia" Movement Gains Worldwide Momentum



Kiilu Nyasha

The worldwide fight to free political prisoners continues to grow.

Freedom fighters and other militants worldwide are continuing to rally mass demonstrations for freedom for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose motion for a federal evidentiary hearing is still pending.

Mumia's legal defense team criticized federal Judge William H. Yohn's refusal to admit any of the four *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") briefs submitted to him in support of Mumia's October 15, 1999 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, which stayed the execution warrant signed by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge last year.

Mumia called the *amicus curiae* briefs "history lessons about fundamental human rights that were violated by the state with impunity" and invited all to "read and learn what it means to have a court-appointed lawyer who seems like a prosecutor and a judge who is one."

Judge Yohn said he was aware of the worldwide interest in the case, but that additional briefs were "unnecessary and unhelpful," according to the *New York Daily News*.

Amicus briefs, as they are commonly called, are legal arguments submitted to a court by persons or organizations who are not parties to a case, but wish to insure the court is aware of particular legal arguments and precedents that relate to that case. The decision to admit *amicus* briefs into the record is a matter of judicial discretion.

The first brief was submitted by the Philadelphia National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and declared the prosecution's use of Mumia's political statements to justify capital punishment unconstitutional and chilling to the First Amendment right of free expression of ideas; and thus the grounds upon which the state court's death sentence was based were unconstitutional.

The second brief was submitted by six legal organizations: The National Lawyers Guild, the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Prisoners Self-Help Legal Clinic, and the Southern Poverty Law Center. This brief dealt with the history and significance of federal *habeas corpus* review of state court convictions and the parameters of the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, especially in light of recent Supreme Court decisions in favor of review.

The third brief was submitted by a group of 22 members of the British

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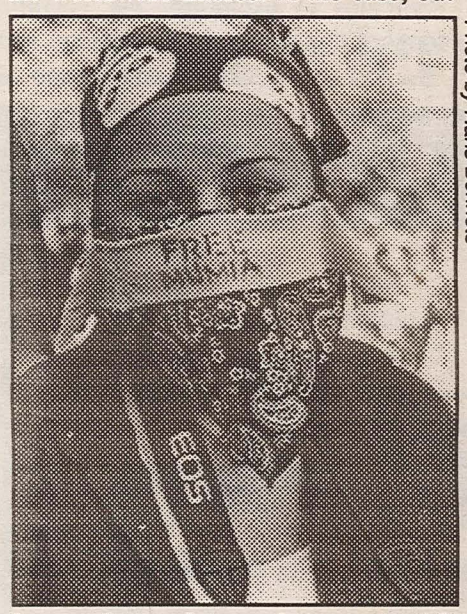


Photo by Hans Bennets

Los Angeles, August 16, 2000 — The Los Angeles Police regularly used tear gas to quell Free Mumia demonstrators and others.

Photo by Hans Bennets

February 28, 2000 — San Francisco, Angela Davis, former political prisoner, now a University of California professor at Santa Cruz, is arrested along with other protesters.

The Call

©MAJ 2000

The phone rings.

It's been a month since you've heard the voice of your child, your mate or your parent. A half-minute recording begins blathering.and soon the voice of your loved one comes on the line. For ten short and precious minutes you share sweet nothings, hopes, and family news before the line goes dead.

Depending on where you are calling from your ten minute phone call cost $6.00, $10.00, or $17.50. And that cost is borne by over 2 million families in America, the families of prisoners who pay more per minute, per call than any other population in America.

Welcome to the nationwide scam where state and private prison administrators shake down the poor with absurdly high phone rates, which, because of lucrative kickbacks, constitutes a hidden tax upon those least able to afford it.

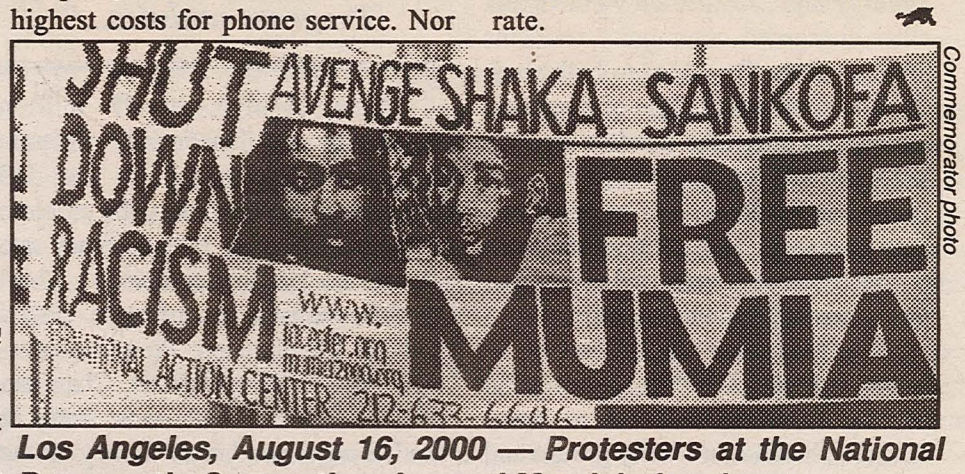
At a time when satellite and computer technology has driven telephone cost down to a nickel or a dime a minute (witness the flood of ATT and Sprint commercials on TV), state and privately-run prisons charge upwards to a dollar or even two dollars a minute for collect calls. If we accept that most of those imprisoned in the U.S. are from poor and working class families, then we must acknowledge that it is the poorest of the poor, who are saddled with the highest costs for phone service. Nor are those prices simply the costs of doing business, as shown by the windfall gained by state and private prison companies.

New York state nets some $21 million per year; California, some $23 million; both Ohio and Missouri net about $14 million in kickbacks from the phone companies; Pennsylvania, some $4 million.

Some relatives of prisoners are suing both the state and private prison companies for such excessive rates. In *Valdez v. Wackenhut Correctional Corp.*, a state action filed in New Mexico in December 1999, relatives of prisoners held in private institutions challenge the exclusive contracts entered into by the prison companies. They argue that these exclusive contracts and subsequent kickbacks violate the state's Unfair Practice Act, which outlaws unfair and unconscionable trade practices. The suit is still pending.

The phone is dialed. You wait anxiously for the voice of your loved one, your child, your mate, or your parent to come on the line. Instead, the annoying voice is heard, a recording once again. It plays thus: "the number you have reached will not accept collect calls." Once again the state, private prisons and phone companies have bled the meager resources of the poor.

There may be a lot of rhetoric about "cutting taxes" in the nation's and state capitals. but for the poor, for the families of those encaged in American gulags, the tax on accepting calls from one's loved ones continues to rise at a remarkable rate.

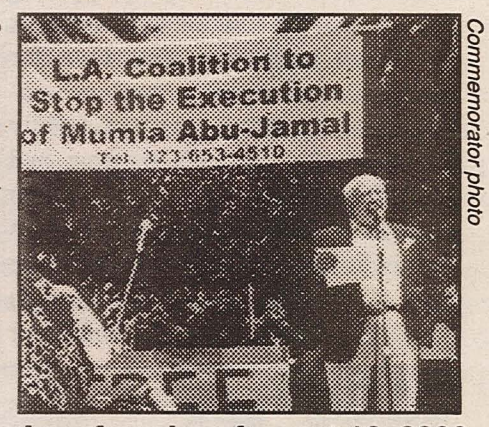


Commemorator photo

Los Angeles, August 16, 2000 — Protesters at the National Democratic Convention demand Mumia's freedom.

Commemorator photo

Los Angeles, August 16, 2000 — Leonard Weinglass, Mumia's lead attorney, tells of the legal battles to save Mumia's life.



Commemorator photo

Los Angeles, August 16, 2000 — veteran actor Ed Asner protests to stop Mumia's execution.

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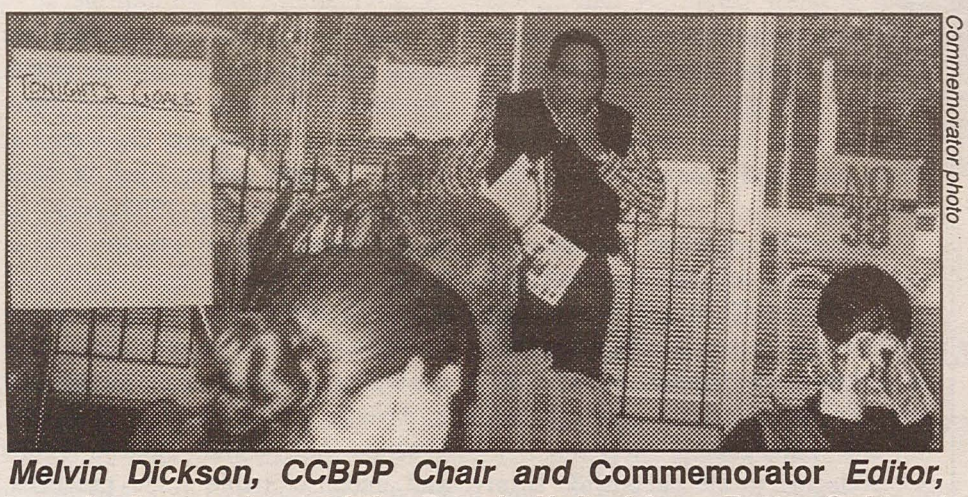
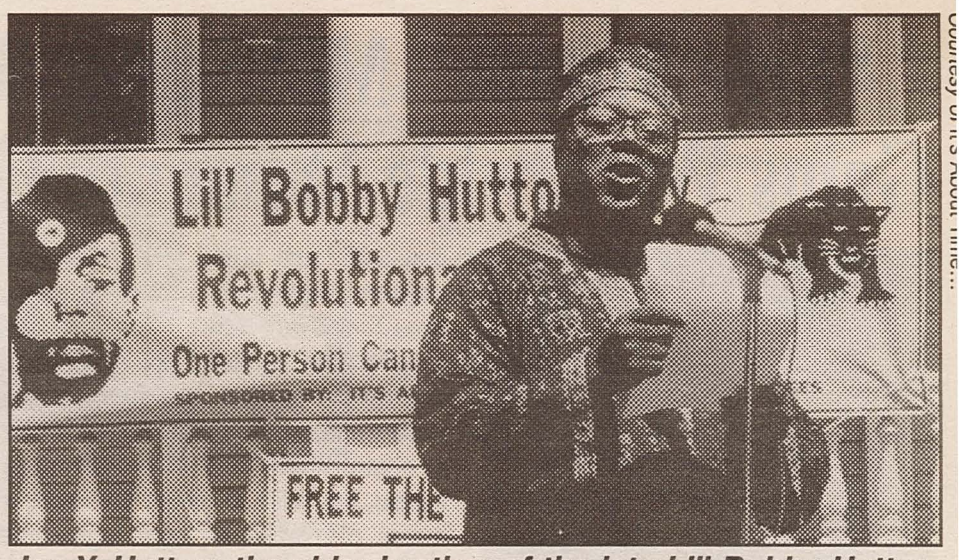
Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign Picks up Steam



Commemorator photo

Melvin Dickson, CCBPP Chair and* Commemorator *Editor, speaks to members of the People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO) about the Bobby Hutton Literacy and Education Campaign, based on BPP Ten-Point Program, October, 2000.



Courtesy of It's About Time...

Jay Y. Hutton, the elder brother of the late Li'l Bobby Hutton, speaks at the Third Annual Li'l Bobby Hutton Commemoration at Lowell Park in Oakland, April, 2000.

Point Number Five: ***We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society.*** *We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.*

The Bobby Hutton Literacy and Community Education Campaign is bringing together students, teachers, minority and low-income workers and other concerned community residents throughout the Bay Area to both teach the history of the struggle of black and minority workers for freedom and the history of the Ten Point Program of the Black Panther Party, and to build succinct economic and political solutions to conditions of poverty and oppression that cause and perpetuate illiteracy.

"In the name and memory of Bobby Hutton, CCBPP is speaking and holding literature tables at as many schools, churches, minority groups and clubs as possible to tell people, young and old, that the solution to illiteracy is not about preparing minorities for mainstream education to become supporters of the status quo," said Billy Goree, Bobby Hutton's nephew and CCBPP volunteer. "Rather, we need to build an alternative education program for youth and minorities that tells the truth of what is going on and, through education and organizing, build our fight to end the genocidal conditions that exploit us every day."

"One of five, or 47 million Americans are functionally illiterate and, even according to the US Department of Education, the problem is on the rise. That 23% illiteracy rate places the US higher than 43 Third World countries, according to United Nations Development Program statistics..."

"One of five, or 47 million Americans are functionally illiterate and, even according to the US Department of Education, the problem is on the rise. That 23% illiteracy rate places the US higher than 43 Third World countries, according to United Nations Development Program statistics," said Melvin Dickson, Chairman of the CCBPP. "While most states in the US now spend more money on the prison industry than on higher education, one half of all adults in federal and state correctional facilities cannot read or write. While 22% of illiterate Americans are African American, the percentage of illiteracy among African Americans is much higher than in the rest of the population. Poverty has increased to such an extent that one in four children go to bed hungry each night in the United States, virtually the same ratio as illiteracy. With the implementation of workfare and other laws that require one must work up to 30 hours per week in a workfare placement – not a real job at living wages – in order to receive food stamps, many people are working two or three part-time jobs with no benefits to feed their families, it is clear that all the so-called gains from the civil rights movement have been virtually dismantled. There is less opportunity for minorities, women and the working poor to survive or improve our standard of living. We have no choice but to organize to fight for real solutions and fundamental systemic change in how this economy is run."

"Our youth, whose parents usually do not have the time or the resources to guarantee that their children receive the critical education needed to overcome the oppression and genocidal conditions they face, are seeking direction. The Bobby Hutton Literacy and Community Education Campaign is about providing just that. Children and adults can learn literacy skills while helping to produce and distribute *The Commemorator* through activities like speaking engagements and literature tables. They will be learning the history of our struggle for freedom and telling others about it."

Little Bobby Hutton was the first member of the Black Panther Party, after founders Bobby Seale and Dr. Huey P. Newton. Little Bobby had met Bobby Seale at the North Oakland Service Center, where both of them were working at the time.

As Huey recalled in his book *Revolutionary Suicide,* "Even though he was only about fifteen years old then, he was a responsible and mature person, determined to help the cause of Black people. He became the Party's first treasurer. Little Bobby was the youngest of seven children; his family had come to Oakland from Arkansas when he was three years old. His parents were good, hard-working people, but Bobby had endured the same hardships and humiliations to which so many young Blacks in poor communities are subjected. Like many of the brothers, he had been kicked out of school. Then he had gotten a part-time job at the Service Center. After work he used to come around to Bobby Seale's house to talk and learn to read. At the time of his murder, he was reading *Black Reconstruction in America* by W.E.B. Du Bois."

Li'l Bobby was known by his comrades to exemplify the youthful longing and quest for knowledge and

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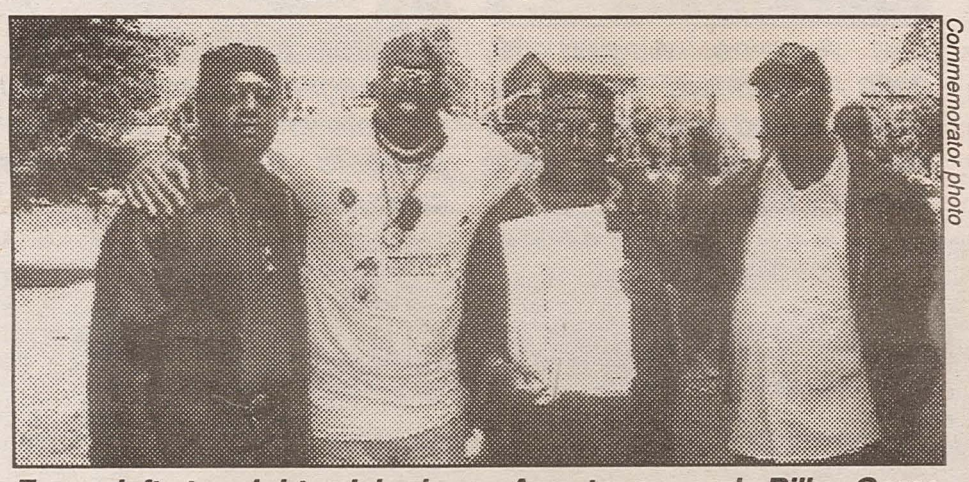
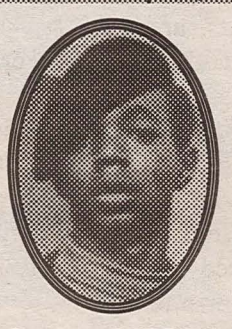


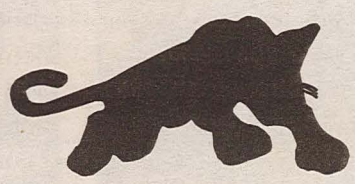
Commemorator photo

From left to right, Jaharhara Armstrong and Billy Goree,* Commemorator *staff, join Jay Y. Hutton, who holds a certificate from the City of Oakland designating April 22 Bobby Hutton Day, and Bobby Coleman, former BPP member.

Tribute to Bobby James Hutton

April, 1951 to April, 1968





Support CCBPP'S campaign to purchase a headstone for Li'l Bobby's gravesite.
Send donations to 5761 Walnut Street
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Sankofa Executed by Criminal Injustice System

After a tortuous 19 years on death row, during which time he received four stays of execution for a crime he allegedly committed at age 17, and despite nationwide appeals for his life, Shaka Sankofa (formerly Gary Graham) was executed in Texas June 22, 2000.

On June 16, a full-page ad signed by six former death row prisoners appeared in *The New York Times,* calling on Governor George Bush and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to stop the execution of Gary Graham (Shaka Sankofa) to no avail. With 134 executions on his record, Governor Bush backed the board's refusal to even look at the case.

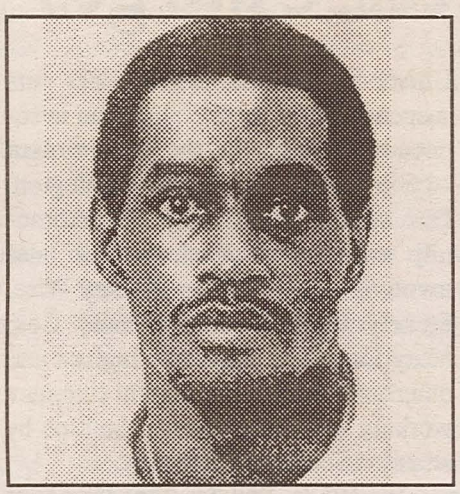
Lacking resources to hire an attorney, Sankofa was represented by public defender Ron Mock, who at the time had only three years of experience. Sankofa was convicted of murder in a two-day trial.

Sankofa grew up the victim of extreme poverty, abuse and neglect. He was a seventh grade dropout who admitted to committing a series of armed robberies while a minor. While he was in jail for the robbery charges, police and prosecutors named him a possible suspect in the murder case of Bobby Lambert who was shot and killed with a .22 caliber pistol in a Houston supermarket parking lot in 1981.

Much of the evidence contained in the police reports supporting Sankofa's innocence was not used at his trial or initial appeals. Lawyers began a new investigation into the case in 1993, twelve years after he was convicted of the murder of Lambert, a white man and known narcotics trafficker with a long criminal record.

Sankofa's eligibility for the death penalty stemmed from a robbery charge despite the fact the victim was found with $6,000 cash on his body at the time of his death. Police didn't follow-up on leads which connected Lambert's death to Lambert's involvement in illegal drug trafficking and impending grand jury testimony, and instead focused on Sankofa as the perpetrator.

The charge was based on the testimony of a single eyewitness who stated she saw the gunman for a only a few seconds from thirty to forty feet away, at night, through the windshield of her car. There was no physical evidence linking Sankofa to the murder and six eyewitnesses independently established the gunman was shorter



Shaka Sankofa was arrested for a crime he allegedly commited at age 17. He was executed by the state of Texas 19 years later.

than Sankofa and had different facial characteristics. Sankofa had alibis for that night from four witnesses who passed polygraph tests stating that he was with them on the night of Lambert's death. Ballistics tests revealed that the bullet that killed Lambert did not come from Sankofa's gun. Even Lambert's widow appealed to the governor of Texas to spare Sankofa's life, stating that she doubted Sankofa was her husband's killer.

The United States Supreme Court refused to consider Sankofa's appeal.

Death penalty opponents, constitutional lawyers, judges and legal associations say Sankofa was one of the thousand of poor and minority defendants who do not receive the constitutionally guaranteed right to effective legal counsel and are imprisoned or executed each year in the United States. Thirty-seven percent of the two of three death penalty cases reversed on appeal were the result of inadequate legal defense, according to a Columbia University study.

"While the media focuses on individual, court-appointed legal defense attorneys as the problem, we know they are generally overworked with too many cases, have inadequate time and lack of access to the resources needed to represent their clients, and they are undercompensated. The primary crime most of those on death row and in our nation's prison system is the crime of being poor," said CCBPP Chair Melvin Dickson. "Our people will continue to be enslaved, warehoused and murdered until we build organization to end it."

"The death penalty is used to justify the government using citizens' tax money for building more prisons and maintaining the criminally 'unjust' system of using prisoners as slave labor for maximum profits for the international monopoly capitalist class," commented Raymond Joe, volunteer with the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP).

"Studies say currently one of three black men between the age of 18 to 24 are in prison. What happened to Sankofa will continue to happen to low-income-and-no income black and minority workers under our current system unless we organize to end it. It's clear we must join together to build the Ten Point Program and demand an end to the genocide and slavery existing in 21st century America. Join us today. No one is immune," urged Dickson. All interested in organizer training programs should call Dickson at (510) 652-7170.

All power to the people!

Letter to the Editor

What Will It Take...

Dear Editor,

What will it take to make the police accountable to the community they protect and serve? First we must realize that the police, informally known as night watchmen, made sure slaves stayed on the plantations and out of certain areas, sounds familiar. Under the directions of corporate America and the ruling class, the police, as they are called today, was formed in the northeastern states during the industrial revolution to quash strikes and riots and act as goons to keep unions from forming. These conditions still exist today. The police are the first line of defense against oppressed people. They come into our communities on a mission, not to make us feel safe, but to keep the status quo of brutalizing, stealing, and murdering. As victimized people we protest and write to our elected officials only to realize that our voices are not being heard.

We file lawsuits in Federal, State, and Municipal courts only to find out that corporate America and the ruling class controls them too. Will the police ever be accountable to the people? I don't know; but I do know that we can force corporate America to leash and muzzle their dogs of prey. We can't win with physical force today, but we can win or at least create change, by boycotting and cutting corporate America off at its source: capital. Money leaves the community in various forms, but never comes back. Every time there is an act of police brutality in our communities, we must respond swiftly and collectively. United we stand, divided we fall.

The Labor Revolution began in Oakland, let the battle continue in Oakland. Shut down the port, the buses, whatever it takes to let those in corporate power know to leash and muzzle your dogs of prey: the police.

Sincerely,

Judge Rice/PUEBLO

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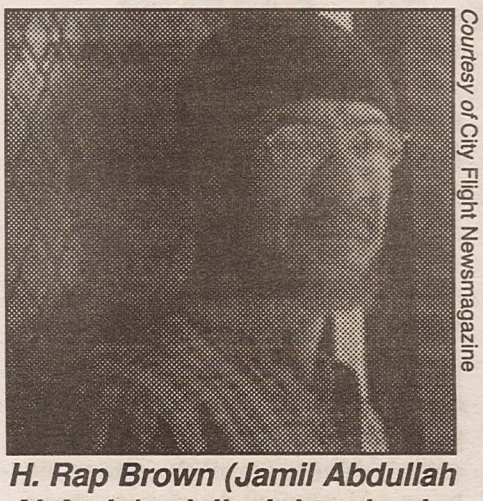
Civil Rights Leader H. Rap Brown (Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin) Faces Charges



Courtesy of City Flight Newsmagazine

H. Rap Brown (Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin) civil rights leader and militant freedom fighter.

By Christine Pugh

The arrest of civil rights leader and militant Black freedom fighter Hubert Gerold "H. Rap" Brown (Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin) in White Hall, Lowndes County, Alabama last winter for the alleged shooting death of one Fulton County, Georgia sheriff deputy and assault on another, brought to national attention the story of his continued struggle against the forces of oppression and repression in this country.

Having pled not guilty, Al-Amin remains incarcerated pending trial.

"He's been fighting the system since he was 16-years-old, and the system has been trying to kill him," J. L. Chestnut, Al-Amin's Selma, Alabama lawyer, told *The New York Times* after the arrest.

The current case against former Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) chairman, now nationally recognized Muslim cleric, began when Al-Amin was stopped by the police on May 31, 1999 in Cobb County, Georgia. He was charged with driving without insurance, receiving stolen goods and impersonating a police officer. Police alleged Al-Amin had a police badge in his wallet and told the police he was a police officer. White Hall Mayor John Jackson later confirmed that he had appointed Al-Amin an auxiliary officer in the town, effective the day after the arrest.

When Al-Amin did not appear in court pursuant to the charges, two deputy sheriffs, Richard Kinchen and Aldranon English, were dispatched to serve him with an arrest warrant and were shot while near Al-Amin's Atlanta West End home. A citywide manhunt for Al-Amin was launched. Kinchen has since died. Al-Amin denies shooting anyone.

Deputy Sheriff English claims he shot his alleged attacker in the abdomen, and police reported they found a trail of blood leading from the shooting site to a nearby house. Police medics, however, say Al-Amin showed no sign of injury or wounds at the time of his arrest several days later.

"Al-Amin is a respected Muslim," said David Hilliard, former Black Panther Party (BPP) Chief of Staff, who was in charge of BPP day-to-day operations during the time H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael and other members of SNCC leadership were drafted into the Oakland, CA-based organization.

"During the civil rights movement Al-Amin was a respected member of SNCC, before he was drafted into the Black Panther Party (BPP) in 1968. In comparison to his membership in the Black Panther Party, he's been a Muslim much longer, from 1971 to the present, almost 30 years," said Hilliard.

Nihad Awad, Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, told a Washington, D.C. press conference shortly after Al-Amin's arrest, that the American Muslim Council, The Islamic Society of North America, and the Muslim American Society began a legal defense fund for Jamil, a Muslim Imam (cleric).

"Official media nationwide is portraying Al-Amin as a dangerous Black Panther Party leader and demonizing him as a violent radical; they are not saying what Al-Amin represents for the black, poor and minority people of the nation — a respected civil rights and religious leader," said Melvin Dickson, Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) Chairman.

"Huey Newton and Bobby Seale formed the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in response to violence inflicted on black people throughout the nation by the oppressor," Dickson explained. "As Huey wrote in his *Revolutionary Suicide* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York 1973), he and Bobby chose the logo of a black panther — first utilized by the Lowndes County (Mississippi) Freedom Organization — because 'the panther is a fierce animal, but he will not attack until he is backed into a corner; then he will strike out.'

"Just as the official media supported the government's counter-intelligence (COINTELPRO) program in the late 60's and early 70's by portraying BPP as a violent organization, minimizing its true struggle for freedom and dignity for all exploited and oppressed people as embodied in the Ten Point Program, they are misrepresenting Al-Amin's continued work on behalf of his community and his class today," said Dickson.

Al-Amin began his political involvement in the same manner as most blacks growing up in the Jim Crow South. Born the son of working class parents in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, whose father was an Esso (Standard Oil) laborer and his mother a domestic worker, Al-Amin developed a sense of outrage over racial injustice at a very young age, often arguing with his teachers about prejudice in American and classical literature, including Shakespeare.

Al-Amin first became involved in the civil rights movement in the spring of 1960, following in the footsteps of his brother Ed, who had been expelled from Southern University for joining sit-ins in the late 1950s. In the spring of 1960, Al-Amin's high school class joined a demonstration at Southern University, and the whole class was suspended for two days. Ed soon introduced Al-Amin to the Non-violent Action Group (NAG), a Washington, D.C. student group which did community work, many of whom were later involved with SNCC — Stanley Wise, Stokely Carmichael, Courtland Cox, Mary Lovelace, Muriel Tillinghast and others. Al-Amin spent several summers working with NAG during the time he attended Southern University.

In 1963, SNCC, the Freedom Rider organization, organized the Mississippi Summer Project, which brought hundreds of white college students into Mississippi and during which civil rights workers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman were murdered. Al-Amin went to Holmes County, Mississippi for about four weeks to help with the SNCC organizing.

Al-Amin accompanied a delegation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) which went to the Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, NJ later that summer, where MFDP claimed the recognized delegation to the Convention did not represent the people of Mississippi, but the Democratic Party refused to seat the MFDP delegation, offering only a token two seats which MFDP refused. Al-Amin said this was an eye-opener for many, when the movement's so-called liberal friends refused to support them, or when the federal government stepped in ostensibly to help investigate the murders:

> Folks never want to believe that kind of shit. Like even when you were down South and something happened, you'd call the FBI and they'd come out there and trick you into believing that they were going to see that you got some justice. You had to believe them because they represented the federal government. And you didn't want to face the fact that the federal government wasn't on your side. Well, we found out. Bobby Kennedy was Attorney General and folks didn't want to believe it, but he did not come to the aid of the civil rights workers. In Albany, Georgia, the federal government had civil rights workers arrested and tried because a cracker said they were hurting his business. In Mississippi, civil rights workers were killed, because Bobby Kennedy said the federal government couldn't protect them. In Alabama, civil rights workers were killed and the federal government wouldn't move against Wallace. And yet negroes cried over the Kennedys worse than they would've cried over their own mamas. The Kennedys didn't do anything for the rights of Black people, but because they talked like they cared, negroes fell for what they said like a bunch of chumps. When John Kennedy had a chance to appoint a federal judge in Mississippi who would knock down some of those racist laws, he appointed a cracker pig racist named Cox. That showed how much he thought of Black people. *(Die Nigger Die!*, page 61)

In the fall of 1964, Al-Amin left school to work in the library of the Department of Agriculture, commuting

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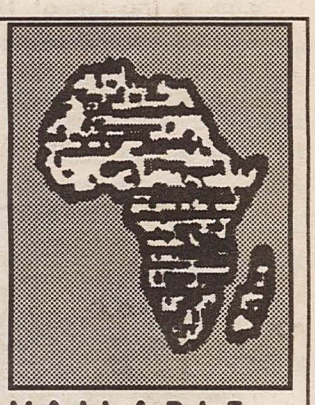

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back and forth to SNCC headquarters in Atlanta, GA from Washington, D.C. At the same time he was elected Chair of NAG, where he organized to reduce the fears and tensions between Howard University students and, as he put it, "the brothers on the block," encouraging the two groups to join together in the face of the divide-and-conquer methods perpetuated by those in control.

Al-Amin quit his job to become a neighborhood worker for the federal War on Poverty but soon realized the War on Poverty programs: 1) were designed to buy off people the government felt were threatening, and 2) did not deal with the root cause of poverty, but the effects of poverty, using "Green Power" to suppress Black Power. When Al-Amin tried to form a union, the government offered him a job, and after he refused, they transformed his neighborhood program into a police-community relations program. So, Al-Amin left that and became a full-time SNCC organizer.

Al-Amin and other members of the Lowndes County Christian Movement for Human Rights, later known as the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, set up a tent city and conducted a historic voter registration drive. In 1965, the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., passed through Lowndes County. This march helped raise national public awareness which led Congress to approve the Voting Rights Act. The groundwork that was necessary for the successes of the civil rights movement largely began in this rural southern county, due to the tireless efforts by Al-Amin and others like him.

It was during this time that segregationists reacted in a backlash of violence, which led to the bombings of Black churches, and the death of civil rights workers by FBI provocateurs, members of the White Citizens Council and the Ku Klux Klan.

Al-Amin went to work in Alabama in the fall of 1966, where SNCC had candidates running for election in Lowndes and Dallas Counties. Al-Amin was assigned to Greene County, where SNCC was trying to get a candidate on the ballot. As the election neared, it became apparent to the SNCC organizers that the powers-that-be had no intention of allowing a black candidate on the ballot. So SNCC, along with the Black Panther Party, began organizing a Freedom Election which would create a parallel government.

Shortly after, Al-Amin, along with George Greene, were accused of stealing a gun and were arrested, held on a $1,000 bond. The town postponed the local election as result of community pressure. Meanwhile, in the state elections George Wallace said his wife had won every county in the state except for Greene County. Al-Amin was assigned state project director, and in 1967, was elected chairman of SNCC.

When BPP began to receive requests for assistance in starting new Party branches, Newton and other leaders saw that BPP needed far more than just courageous fighters; they needed administrators, and looked to SNCC as having some of the most disciplined organizers in the country, registering people to vote and organizing cooperatives. They originally planned to draft Stokely Carmichael into the Party and make him Prime Minister, then to add all the SNCC leadership, including Al-Amin and James Forman, and merge the two organizations. Cities across the nation were exploding, while the movement in the South was diminishing.

BPP leadership thought there was mutual need for a merger. "Our long-range plan was to organize the communities of the North, especially the brothers on the block, using SNCC's administrative talent to coordinate the activities. Combining their work in the South and ours in the North would give the forces of Black liberation a powerful striking force," wrote Newton. In 1967, BPP communicated with SNCC leadership through Eldridge Cleaver (then Minister of Propaganda), and the merger seemed to be on.

According to Newton, however, SNCC never raised the matter formally to its membership, so when BPP announced the merger, some SNCC members reacted and whatever inter-organizational trust had existed, broke down and the merger was off. (According to Newton, BPP leaders were later relieved there were no formal ties when SNCC began to advocate a separate, black nation, and Stokely Carmichael began to align himself with reactionary African governments.)

Al-Amin actively supported an alliance of Black revolutionary forces and in 1968 became BPP's Minister of Justice. During the two years that Al-Amin was a member of the Party, he traveled across the US, speaking on college campuses, and it was during this time that he, along with many other activists, became a prime target of the FBI's counterintelligence program. COINTELPRO used misinformation, disruption and infiltration to produce distrust and divisions within BPP leadership and in other activist organizations in the 60's and 70's, such as Nation of Islam, Black Muslims, NAACP, SCLC, SNCC, and many other left, minority and/or militant organizations.

During his BPP speaking tours, Al-Amin utilized the vernacular of brother Malcolm X, who promulgated the idea of self-defense. He became famous for saying "Violence in America is as American as cherry pie." The government constantly attacked and harassed Al-Amin, and ultimately arrested him in 1967 in Washington, D.C. for inciting a riot when speaking in Cambridge, Maryland.

While out on bail, Al-Amin was accused of crossing state lines with a gun when he took a legally purchased rifle in its case on a plane to New Orleans. Afterwards, the federal government passed the infamous "Rap Brown" rider, making it a crime to cross state lines to "incite riot."

After a bomb blast killed two SNCC organizers near the Maryland courthouse where he was to undergo trial on the riot charges, Al-Amin went underground. Eighteen months later he was arrested in New York City on assault and robbery charges arising out of an incident at a New York City bar with a reputation for being a drug hang-out. Al-Amin served five years in prison where, in 1971, he adopted Malcolm X's Sunni Muslim faith.

Immediately after Al-Amin's release from Greenhaven (NY) prison in 1976, William Kunstler, the famous civil rights attorney and Al-Amin's legal counsel, told the press that Al-Amin had served five years in prison and been persecuted for the past nine years because he had committed the crime of struggling for his people.

Al-Amin was repeatedly the target of intensive FBI, BATF and Atlanta police investigations throughout the 1990s. BATF and FBI agents arrested Al-Amin in 1995, allegedly for shooting a man in the foot. These charges were dismissed, however, the victim said police pressured him into accusing Al-Amin.

Attorney Bruce Harvey, who represented Al-Amin during this case, stated that his client had changed from being a revolutionary and radical leader into a spiritual leader, and that he had put down the shotgun and picked up the Koran. Harvey stated Al-Amin would not be the first, nor the last, black man framed by the system.

"My feeling concerning myself," Al-Amin told *The New York Times*, "is that the federal government has never been comfortable with the fact that I just did five years and, after coming out, I really never did apologize," adding that he was under close scrutiny as a Muslim cleric because the US government associated Islam with terrorism.

Al-Amin became one of Atlanta's most prominent Muslim clergymen and opened a Sunni mosque called the Community Masjid in that city's West End community. His friends and colleagues report that Al-Amin had renounced violence, as he has become nationally known as a key promulgator of the Muslim faith, at one point heading the Atlanta Council of Imams.

Al-Amin remains an inspiration to poor, black and minority people struggling throughout the country and the world against institutionalized racism and economic oppression. "Institutionalized racism and the caste system are alive and well in this country, despite the many black civil service workers in local governments, such as in Atlanta, Georgia," stated David Hilliard. "Papa Doc in Haiti and Mobutu Sese Seko in Africa were both tools for the ruling class, headed by international monopoly capitalism. They made their personal wealth from carrying out the political wishes of the CIA which represented the US ruling class interests. The US government and its media have never, to this day, stopped lying, in order to discredit BPP and the movement of the 60s. They will go to any extent to use whatever propaganda they can muster to undermine the goals of the Black Panther Party and the 1960s moment."

The Commemorator promotes and educates to the true goals of BPP and denounce trials by the mainstream, hue and cry media such as the media coverage of the arrest of Al-Amin. We call on anyone interested in joining this effort and the struggle for freedom and fundamental change in the criminal justice system to contact Melvin Dickson, editor and chairman of CCBPP.

All power to the people!

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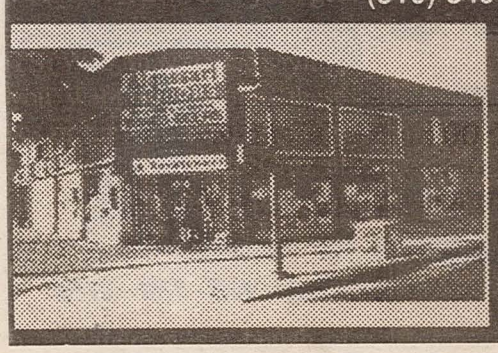

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Artist Corner:
Boots (Ray Riley)

Commemorator photo

Political rapper Boots (Ray Riley) is interviewed by Tiffany Hall,* Commemorator *staff volunteer.

Editor's note: Boots (Ray Riley), a regionally-known political rapper, and currently lead member of the Coup, grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. His father was an early member of the Black Panthers. CCBPP has known Boots almost since its inception, first as a member of the now-defunct Mau Mau Rhythm Collective that worked closely with CCBPP Youth Committee, organizing youth talent shows back in the East Bay in the early 1990s, and then as a member of the now-defunct Young Comrades, a local youth activist group, that took on issues of police harassment, and the issue of US political prisoners, such as geronimo Jijaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Boots learned organizing skills early on. As a teenager, he learned community canvassing, distributing leaflets and newspapers and other organizing tactics from United Farm Workers Association in Delano and MacFarlane, California. Boots brought those skills back to his neighborhood and to Oakland High School where he organized a student walkout to protest the School Administration's plan for year-round school and implementation of a two-tier "tracking" educational system.

In 1998, a Palo Alto church hosted a "Mumia Abu-Jamal Tribunal" in response to a KGO (ABC affiliate) network negatively-biased portrayal of Mumia. Boots, along with several other youth who acted as Tribunal judges, found Mumia "not guilty" of murder.

It was Boots' experience with these and other minority and community groups that permitted him to use his artistic talents as a positive force during an era when the area's hip-hop scene was out front with political and gangsta rap, including high profile rap artists Paris, Too Short, Tupac, Snoopy Dog and Digital Underground.

Below, Boots tells how he used his music to organize youth and others to join the unsuccessful campaign against passage of California's Proposition 21, the Juvenile Justice Initiative, which allows for the arrest, trial, imprisonment and in some cases, death of 14 to 18 year-olds. His clear political understanding of both the fight for freedom, and of his duty as a youth and minority leader to continue to build organization and broaden the movement to defeat the international economic forces which are causing poverty, hunger, destruction and death worldwide, come out through his music as a call to action.

COMMEMORATOR: Why did you decide to become a political rapper as opposed to a gangsta rapper?

Continued on page 18

There's certain tricks of the trade to try and halt your defeat
Like taking tupperware to an "all you can eat"
Returning used shit for new saying you lost your receipt
And writing four figure checks when your account's deplete
Then all your problems pile up about a mile
Thinkin' about a partner you can dial up to help you out this foul stuff
Whole family sleepin' on a futon while you're clippin coupons
Eatin salad tryin' to get full off the croutons
'Crosstown, the situation is identical
Somebody's getting strangled by the system and its tentacles
Misconceptions raise questions to be solved
Alot of b-boys are broke, alot of homeless got jobs
You can make 8 bones an hour till you pass out and still be assed out
Most pyramid schemes don't let you cash out
They say this generation makes the harmony pray
But crime rises consistent with the poverty rate
You take the workers and jobs, you're gonna have murders and mobs
A gang of preachers screamin' sermon over murmurs and sobs
Saying pray for a change from the Lord above you
They'd tear this motherfucker up if they really loved you.

(Taken from the Coup's Album: *Kill My Landlord) — Boots (Ray Riley)*

Poems
By Tolbert Small, M.D.

Slaves

Great pyramids, rise up from the desert to challenge the stars.
Oh monument to pharaoh, the living god, who built thee?
Surely, not pharaoh and the dead gods he worshipped.

Mighty acropolis, the height of the city,
The home of the great gods Zeus and Athena;
Who built thee?
Not Socrates.
Not Plato.
Not the great kings who bowed before thee.
What rough hands carved thy marble wonder?
How many backs were lashed to create your beauty?

Aeterna Roma, who built your great pagan Temples?
Who built your mighty coliseum?
How many backs were lashed to create your beauty?
Who built your aqueducts?
Aqueducts that perpetually flows into each century.
Slaves, truly the most came from the least.

Great White House, cradle of democracy, eternal seat of freedom.
Who cast thy heroic bronze statues?
Who carved thy pristine white marble walls?
Did the lazy dark people build this citadel of freedom?
How many slaves' backs were lashed to create our great White House?
Truly, the slaves who crawled through your backdoor built your front door.

Reincarnation

Let our bones rot into the decay of this world.
From this decay, our roots will sprout forth beautiful roses
Whose vines will strangle the enemies of the sun:
Those who starve the hungry,
Create the poverty of this world,
Murder the sun,
And drown the rivers and forests.

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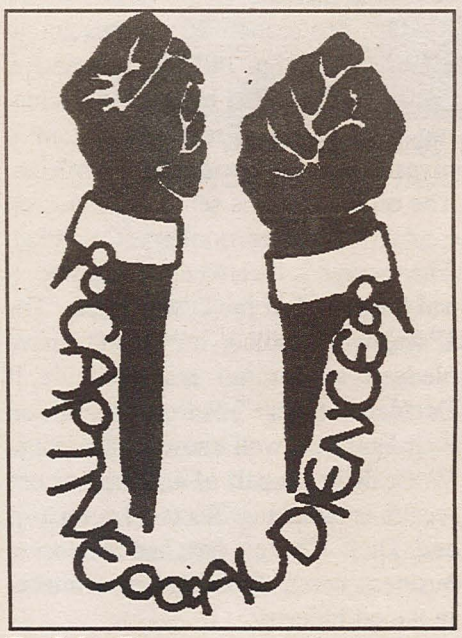
America's Parole and Criminal Justice Apartheid System



By John Donner

Editor's note: This article will appear in two parts. The first will define the problem, and the second, the solution.

American parole and criminal justice system decision-making is poisoned by the same institutional economic class and racial discrimination that infects American society as a whole. There is a growing consensus among concerned community organizations, criminal justice system stakeholders and experts, that parole decision-making factors must be counter-weighted to account for systemic discrimination against the poor, lower-income and racial minorities who are disproportionately filling the lock-ups and death houses of America.

The premise that economic class and race accurately predict and determine criminal behavior and inclination is a long and well-established part of parole and criminal justice system decision-making in America. In 1966, the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development published a document on parole decision-making which said, *"most murderers and violent offenders are poor and the remainder are at best lower middle class."*

Elaborating further, the document stated, "[c]rimes of violence are most frequent among the most impoverished and most poorly educated segments of the population. *Homicide is especially more frequent among Negroes than among* whites in the United States... "The injuries and wrongs inflicted by institutional class and racial discrimination under the first premise, above, are greatly magnified by the second premise, below, where the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development elaborates on its decision-making methodology in regard to imprisonment and parole :

There are two ways of making decisions as to how a given individual is apt to behave in relation to some future event (for example how a given prisoner will behave on parole). These are:

(a) knowing a great deal about the individual's behavior in situations the individual sees as similar to the one we are predicting for; or

(b) knowing just enough about the individual to be able to place him accurately in a group or class of individuals, as a class whose behavior in analogous situations we can specify fairly precisely.

For practical purposes, the second technique is all that is available for most decision-making and may work extremely well, provided one has

(a) defined the characteristics of the class or group so that the members really tend to behave similarly in similar situations, and

(b) correctly identified the individual as indeed belonging to that group.

Assessment of an individual's future criminal inclination will not be based upon amassing a great deal of knowledge about that person as an individual. It will be determined, instead, by identifying that individual as a member of a class or group, whose criminal inclination has already been prejudged. This is the second premise of parole and criminal justice system decision-making in America. As we can see, federal agencies responsible for development and implementation of national parole policy, such as the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, cited above, labeled the poor, lower class as the source of most murders and violent offenses, in general, and Negroes as the source of most murders, in specific, under the first premise, nearly forty years ago.

The federal government has employed its power to grant or deny funding to the states in such a way that virtually every state has *de facto* adopted the federal parole and criminal justice system decision-making model intact, with its institutionalized class and racial discrimination.

The first premise, that economic class and race accurately predict and determine criminal inclination, as the doctrine of the wealthy, ruling class,

Continued on page 19

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Book Review

Last Man Standing

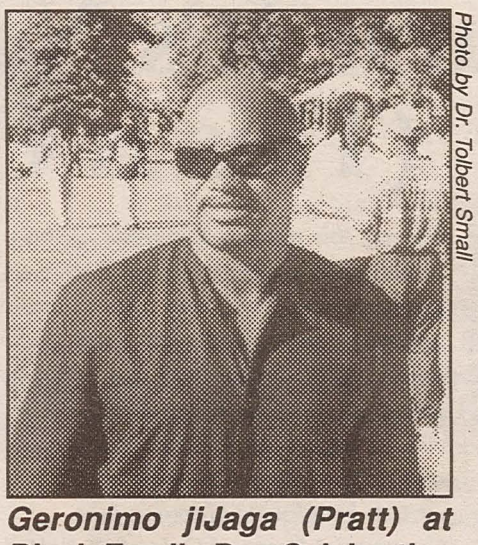


Photo by Dr. Tolbert Small

Geronimo jiJaga (Pratt) at Black Family Day Celebration in Oakland, CA, home of the Black Panther Party.

Last Man Standing, the Tragedy and Triumph of Geronimo Pratt
by Jack Olsen
Doubleday, 500 pages, $27.50

By Mel Fiske

Last Man Standing, the story of geronimo jiJaga Pratt's twenty-seven year frameup, was issued by the noted publishing firm of Doubleday in October. Since then it has been rejected and ignored by book reviewers in much the same way geronimo himself was in the courts and prison.

Maybe the story is too much for the critics. The book, written with power and drama by Jack Olsen, depicts the unvarnished horror of America's "justice" system and its brutal prisons, with stories rivaling those told by Doestoyevsky and Dickens in their classic tales of man's cruelty to fellow men.

Or maybe the truth is that geronimo's story is too great an expose of the FBI's illegal counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO). Or of the hiding of vital evidence by the Los Angeles Police Department and District Attorney's office. Or of the unmitigated efforts by California prison officials to break the spirit and body of the Black Panther leader.

Readers of *The Commemorator* don't need to be reminded of the torture geronimo went through.

Years in the hole. Bread and water only. The same torture that countless other political prisoners went through and, in the case of the "Angola Three," are still going through.

Geronimo's story is their story. Now that it has been told it has to be passed from hand to hand. Otherwise it is talking to itself.

The book is too much of a challenge to the establishment, which includes newspapers and magazines and their book reviewers. It rips away the facade of "justice" that the establishment tries to maintain.

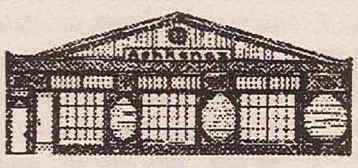
Do Americans know what is being done in their name in the courts and jails of their country? This book reveals it all. Do Americans condone what happens in the courts and jails? Unfortunately, many do. Their eyes have been blindfolded much as the eyes of justice have. This book will open eyes.

The American people certainly do not want to become like the frightened burghers of Nazi Germany who knew about the horrors of the concentration camps and remained silent and accepting. Given a choice, most Americans will refuse to remain silent. Geronimo's book will provide them with the script for clamorous outrage.

If this is to happen, this book will be an important part of the many organizing tools needed to free the "Angola Three," Leonard Peltier, hundreds of other political prisoners, curb the illegalities of the FBI and national police departments, establish justice in the courtrooms and inject humanity and rehabilitation practices into the prison system.

Last Man Standing offers an important lesson to the oppressed of the world: Never give up! For that lesson alone it deserves to be read and spread.

Ashkenaz
Music and Dance Café



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International Update

Of Course It's Not Another Vietnam (This is Columbia!)

Photo by Hans Bennets

Protesters march for the U'wa (indigenous) people of Colombia, against Plan Colombia which is supported by Democrats and Republicans alike.

By Zachary Nelson

A 50-year old civil war still rages in Colombia while today's so-called "new" US foreign policy initiative in support of Colombian President Pastrana's "Plan Colombia" reads like a page out of the history book of waves of US military and political intervention in Colombia, yet this historical context is noticeably absent in news reports in the US establishment press.

In the 1960s, the US government posed a policy of so-called "preventive war" within Colombia, involving direct financing of military operations against peasant areas where the people had organized "self-defense zones" in opposition to the Colombian military. The US "lent" arms, planes, and squadrons of helicopters to be used against the people of Colombia. This was at a time when a guerrilla movement had developed out of less organized forms of resistance in response to the nation's repressive regimes of the 1950s and US. imperialist intervention.

These largely unstructured and uncoordinated peasant groupings started armed struggle dating back to 1949, and took shape in the 1950s as a rural-based self-defense movement, in response to more than a decade of prolonged political upheaval and repressive right-wing rule, and an official policy of employment of government violence against the people, called La Violencia *(The Violence). In 1950, archconservative dictator, Laureano Gomez, took power; to be replaced by the head of the armed forces, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, in a* coup d'etat *in 1953. Rojas Pinilla was in turn overthrown by a junta in May 1957, and replaced as president by Alberto Lleras Camargo in 1958. During this period, hundreds of thousands of Colombians were killed in an unproclaimed civil war, and as many peasants were displaced from their lands, often driven into the cities in search of a means of survival.*

An excerpt from a political analysis published in April, 1967, written by Alberto Gomez of the Communist Party of Colombia, called "Perspectives of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia," is insightful toward understanding the strategy of counterrevolution then and now employed by the Colombian ruling class and US government :

The Camargo government (1958-1962) pursued a dual policy toward the guerrilla areas. On the one hand, measures were taken towards what was called rehabilitation of the "zones affected by the violence." The key elements of this policy were infiltration of the peasant areas by means of credits for promoting production and housing, and a lavish dispensation of promises. Rehabilitation was selective and aimed at winning the political support of sections of the peasantry, especially the ex-guerrillas and their leaders, or at least neutralizing them. On the other hand, districts whose population continued to regard the government with distrust were denied economic aid. The local organizations in these areas were persecuted as before and many of their leaders, especially ex-guerrillas, were murdered. Beginning with 1960, this dual policy became the basis of the "military-civilian action."

The government saw a threat in the existence of the self-defense zones. It realized that they were not a sign of relative equilibrium in the class balance, but a manifestation of class struggle. Consequently, a plan of aggression against these zones began to be elaborated in 1957. It envisaged five stages: civilian action, economic blockade, military action, unification of the zone, and its "return to the orbit of national life."

This government policy rings eerily close to the words of today's "Plan Colombia" of Colombian President Pastrana. Gomez continued:

In early 1965, a new guerrilla movement sprang up in the department of Santander in the north — the Army of National Liberation (ELN) led by student youth. The next phase of the struggle was ushered in with the establishment of FARC at the Second Conference of the Guerrilla Bloc of the South in April, 1966. The conference attached much importance to the study of the tactics and strategy of the enemy (primarily questions relating to "preventive" war, "military-civilian action," and encirclement and airborne operations). A study of the experience of the enemy and the evolution of his tactics, in a word, of his concept of counter-revolutionary war, is essential in order to counter it with a tactics and strategy of revolutionary war in accordance with Colombian conditions.

The "military-civilian" strategy of counterrevolutionary warfare in the countryside was not the only form of US intervention in recent Colombian history. Thirty years ago the Colombian government worked hand-in-glove with the US government and international branch of the AFL-CIO to create "US-style" trade unions to counteract the influence of the existent militant Colombian labor movement. This strategy came at a time when US-based multinational corporations already owned the controlling interests of the majority of Colombian companies, particularly Colombian manufacturing and major agricultural production on the latifundios *(large landed estates, plantations). These combined US military and political interventions in Colombia acted to make Colombia more exploitable, and therefore more lucrative to international monopoly capital.*

The history of US intervention in Colombia goes back even further to the stealing of Panama — which had been part of Colombia until 1903 when US-inspired political manipulations led to Panama's secession from Colombia and immediately more favorable terms for US trade passage through the Panama Canal. Hence the author of the following article asks: Is Colombia the next Vietnam?

In September, 2000, former President Clinton visited the city of Cartagena, Colombia for a single day of meetings intended to solidify a deal for a $1.3 billion Congressional aid package meant to help the Colombian government fight its continuing "War On Drugs." Eighty percent of this taxpayer money is going toward new equipment and training for the Colombian military, which has one of the worst records of human rights abuses in history.

On September 20, protesters at a Gore campaign rally in Sunnyvale, California, unfurled banners denouncing the Vice President's family investments in Occidental Petroleum. The oil company is set to drill soon on a vast reserve in northern Colombia. The reserve is located under the ancestral homeland of the U'wa people. The U'wa, who number only 5,000, have pledged to commit mass suicide if Occidental ("Oxy") Petroleum drills on their land. It is well known that George W. Bush, Jr., is part of a family whose wealth is based in a Texas oil company, and Dick Cheney has had extensive business connections and investments in the oil industry.

While Clinton's visit to Cartagena, Gore's visit to Sunnyvale, and Bush's and Cheney's oil connections remain separate news items (where they are news items at all) in corporate-controlled US media, they demonstrate the depth, cunning and collusion of the selling of Colombia and its people.

In late June, 2000, Congress approved a $1.3 billion package to Colombia, categorized as part of US efforts to aid in the "War on Drugs" in Latin America, particularly in Colombia as the nation responsible for eighty percent of the world's cocaine output. The aid package is part of President Andres Pastrana's "Plan Colombia," an ambitious framework for eradicating the drug trade and ending the civil war there; or so Clinton, Pastrana, a nearly unanimous Congress, and the media would have us believe.

Plan Colombia so far calls for $7.5 billion, of which about half is expected to come from the United States and European nations. Eighty percent of the $1.3 billion approved in June by the US is earmarked for the Colombian military and police, ostensibly for the purpose of coca crop eradication. But are coca crops actually directly responsible for the continued violence and political instability in Colombia?

The present-day war is not fueled by some unilateral, vacuum-sealed economy of narcotics trafficking, entirely disconnected from external political decisions, as US-based corporations, the establishment media and their Colombian counterparts would

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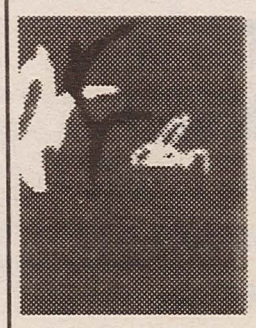

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ARCHIVES

Huey's Corner

1968: Huey's Oakland Trial

Editor's Note: Dr. Huey P. Newton wrote the following selection, Trial, *in 1970 while he was serving three years in a California state prison on a second-degree manslaughter charge. It is from* Revolutionary Suicide, *(published by Stronghold Consolidated Productions, Inc., 1973) which is available in your local bookstore.*

The 1968 trial of Dr. Huey P. Newton for the alleged murder of an Oakland police officer was a pivotal event in the volatile mix that was the movement. The "Free Huey" movement began in Oakland and spread across the US to the streets of Harlem, Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles. The Black Panther Party gave impetus to the civil rights movement in the South, the anti-war movement on the college campuses, the militant movement in US ghettos, and to rural populations in Appalachia.

This struggle for freedom produced reaction by the ruling class in the form of counter-intelligence operations against movement leaders and their organizations by assassinations, imprisonment, infiltration, misinformation, and increased police repression.

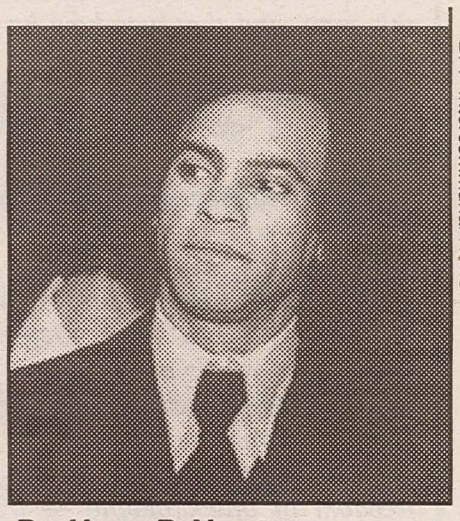
The BPP would never be the same, nor would the movement, as stalwart members like Gene McKinney stepped forward in defense of the struggle, drawing new people into the "Free Huey" campaign and the party. Others lost their political ability or will to fight as the demarcation between two sides became clearer.

Join CCBPP today and find out how you can continue the struggle for the goals of the BPP Ten Point Program.

The prosecutor in my case was Jensen, who later became district attorney of Alameda County. Jensen is a witty and intelligent man and a worthy opponent as far as the law is concerned. He appears to have a photographic memory, and on the basis of legal knowledge alone he is a good lawyer. In my case, he meant to get a conviction of first-degree murder, no matter how far he had to stretch the law, and to that end, he ignored the possibility that there were a number of grounds for reversal and that in time a higher court would decide against the verdict of this trial. A conviction was all he cared about. He knew that if he won his case against me — a person hated by the Establishment — he would be rewarded with fame and rising fortune. What would a reversal matter? A ruling by a higher court would take from two to five years, and by that time he would have achieved what he wanted. My trial was nothing more than an ego trip for him.

Throughout the trial an unspoken "game" or challenge went on in the courtroom between Jensen, the judge, and myself, although a lot of people — especially the jury — knew nothing about it. The jury probably believed that the prosecutor and the judge were honorable men, with only their jobs and justice on their minds. But my lawyers and I understood the undercurrents and intangibles that were always present, difficult as they were to expose. And we knew that if the jury were aware of them also they would see the political nature of much that went on in the courtroom. For example, we surmised from the very start of the trial that Jensen had engineered the racist system by which Blacks would be on jury panels called for duty but eliminated before they could be seated for trial. And we knew that Jensen did not have justice on his mind, but wanted victory at any cost to further his own personal ambitions. These were some of the things that made the whole trial seem like a game — a grim game with my life at stake — but a game nonetheless.

In his opening statement to the jury Jensen charged that I had murdered Office John Frey with full intent, that I had shot Officer Herbert Heanes, and that I had kidnapped Dell Ross. He said that when the first policemen stopped me I had given him false identification, but when the second officer came up, I had correctly identified myself. Then the first officer, Frey, placed me under arrest. He claimed that when the police officer walked me back to his car, I produced a gun and began firing. According to Jensen, I shot Officer Frey with my own gun, which I pulled from inside my shirt, then took his gun and continued shooting, I was charged with shooting Officer Frey five times and Officer Heanes three times. Officer Heanes was supposed to have shot me once. After this, the prosecutor said, I escaped and forced Dell Ross to take me to another part of Oakland.



BPP Intercommunal News

Dr. Huey P. Newton

The most crucial challenge facing the prosecution was to establish motivation for my alleged actions. Jensen claimed that I had three motives for my alleged crimes. First, he said, I had had a prior conviction for a felony and was on probation. Because of this, I knew that having a concealed weapon on my person could lead to another felony conviction if the police officers found the gun on me. Second, they claimed that I had marijuana in the car and that bits of marijuana had been found in the pocket of my pants; this, too, could lead to another felony beef. And, third, they claimed that I had given false identification to the police officer, which was a violation of the law. For these reasons, the prosecutor claimed I was so desperate to escape another felony charge that I killed an officer, wounded another, and kidnapped a citizen. As I said before, the prosecutor was willing to go to any lengths to win his case.

The truth of the matter is that when Frey stopped me, he knew full well who I was, as did every other policeman on the Oakland force, and he tried to execute me in an urban variation of

Continued on page 17

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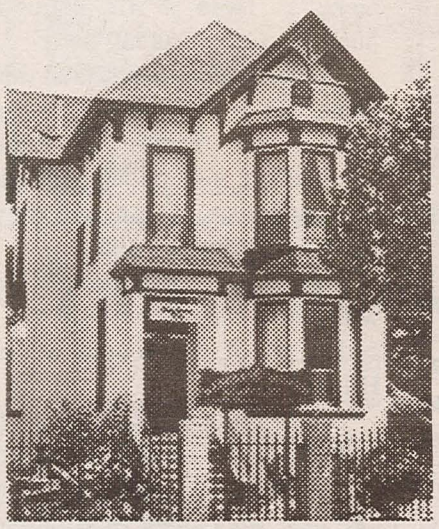
Photographs from "The Gifted..Young Creating from a Black Perspective," a show of young peoples' work featured at the Ebony Museum. *Courtesy of Aissatoui Avola Vernita.*

Aissatoui Avola Vernita
(Executive Director)



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SUBWAY GUITAR **Free Mumia**

Beware: ***We must beat, impeach and recall the Bushes representing fat-rats, internationally. Every citizen must know that there are a class of Fat Rats out there, ready to devour us. Re: Fat Rat (emeritus) #1:Dick Cheney. You be the judge of the new administration and it check it out:***

Background: former Congressman from Wyoming (1978-89) and secretary of defense (1989-93)
a)financial "success" made from the oil industry.
b)political "success" made from the military industry.

Mr. Cheney is a person who knows what side his bread is buttered on Check it out:
As a U.S. representative, Mr. Cheney's voting record:
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Gene Allen McKinney Remembered...

Gentleman Gene

Gene McKinney was a gentleman, a gentle man. Was he called "Gentleman Gene," or did I imagine it? I remember this man, and that was how he was. A flash or a smile, a smooth way, like a kiss. Of course, he was more, much more.

Gene McKinney was a hero, a black hero, a black revolutionary hero, though he was hardly known. That, too, was his way. As Che Guevara said, Gene knew that "words are beautiful and actions are supreme." Gene's action were supreme, for the Black Panther Party, for the freedom of black people — a freedom we still seek.

So long ago, now, it seems — and yet yesterday — in October of 1967, Gene rode with Huey P. Newton, founder and supreme leader of the Black Panther Party. Some would say, and rightly, that Huey rode with Gene. Two black men were confronted by history that October night, the history of black oppression, and two men were challenged by the oppressor. In the end, one oppressor fell, and the Black Panther Party rose on the wings of heroes.

Both are gone now. We cry, I cry. It's too soon, too soon to lose another hero. But let those with ears know that today, black people did indeed lose another one or our great heroes in Gene McKinney. We who knew you, loved you then, and love you now, as always.

— Elaine Brown

Gene A. McKinney

A Steadfast Warrior

I've know Gene and the McKinney family since they moved to Oakland from Albany Village. We also struggled together on the football field at McClymonds, and I think Gene replaced me at end when I graduated. He had guts, and struggled in solidarity with Huey and the rest of the movement, to end racism and exploitation, and to raise the consciousness of people like you and me.

Like so many of us, Gene was an angry young man, who felt struggle would help to solve our problems. We wanted to restore hope by dissenting, and I think Gene mastered the art of political street maneuvering. He was true to his inner self and even in his turmoil, I think he found inner peace. Gene's suffering came because he saved the life of a hero, Huey P. Newton. From saving Huey, he likely faced fear each day of his life.

Gene was a warrior, a protector and preserver, and he had to be discriminating in the company he kept, fearing that the enemy might show up any day. Gene knew he was in a war, and the first rule of war is to know that you're in one. Then you must have the courage to act, and know how to act appropriately.

What enables a warrior to reach clarity of thought is living with the awareness of his own death. The warrior knows the shortness of life and how fragile life really is, and each of his deeds is done as if it were his last. Gene and Huey wanted us to be all we could be, and in our feelings, speech and action, I think they were trying in their own way to make the world a better place, by fighting for what they believed in.

Gene was of a warrior class, and a warrior class is necessary to the well being of humankind, Gene had virtues of courage, nobility, honor, loyalty and he was steadfast with his friends, and he possessed the principle of comradely love. Both Jesus and the Buddha have been spiritual warriors; they both had to resist the temptations of Satan, and Mohammed was also a warrior, and they waged Jihad, war against the powers of evil, as they defined themselves. Gene was both merciful and compassionate. I will miss you brother.

— Charles Aiken

Unsung Hero

Continued from page 1

economic exploitation and political oppression everywhere.

This was most poignantly demonstrated in the early morning of October 28, 1967, when Gene took charge of a volatile situation and saved the life of Huey Newton, lead founder of the BPP. Huey had been shot in a scuffle with police officers on 7th Street in Oakland. Gene commandeered the first vehicle that passed the scene stating, "This is Huey P. Newton, the leader of the Black Panther Party. He has been shot and is in serious condition. He needs help."

Commemorator photo

Joel Dorham, professional musician, friend and classmate, remembers Gene fondly.

He directed the driver to a Panther safe house. Huey was unconscious from a gunshot wound in his abdomen. Gene managed to get to David Hilliard's house where friends and relatives looked after them, and later took Huey to Kaiser Hospital in North Oakland. Had Gene not seized the moment, it is doubtful Huey would have lived through that morning as an unconscious hostage in the hands of the Oakland Police Department, which was largely made up of racist-minded people who hated Huey P. Newton and everything the Black Panther Party represented.

Commemorator photo

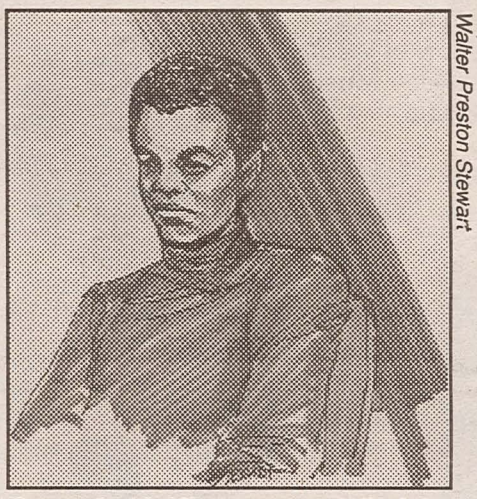
Florence Mouton, long-time Oakland resident, "I've known Gene and the McKinney family a very long time. They are caring people."

Huey and the Panthers proceeded from there into a legal battle that catapulted the Black Panther Party and its goals, defined in the Ten Point Program, onto the world scene through the "Free Huey" Movement.

With the support Huey received from his party, his family and in the community as a whole, their enemies were, for a short time, unable to organize against Huey and the Party. Instead, the Panther newspaper told the real story and explained the context and politics of the situation. Gene McKinney's bravery made these gains possible.

After securing Huey's safety, Gene was sent underground by the Black Panther Party whose leadership, after Huey's incarceration, fell largely on the shoulders of David Hilliard.

Ten months later, on August 24, 1968, McKinney again performed courageously, this time on the witness stand in an Alameda County (CA) courtroom during Huey's murder trial, after Huey had been indicted for first degree murder in the death of Oakland Police Officer John Frey.



Walter Preston Stewart

Gene A. McKinney was jailed for contempt for taking the Fifth at Huey P. Newton Oakland, CA trial in 1968.

Huey's attorney, Charles Garry, asked Gene if he "had been a passenger riding with Huey P. Newton on the morning of October 28, 1967, the same night that Oakland Police Officer John Frey was shot dead?"

Gene answered, "Yes, I was." "Now, Mr. McKinney," Garry continued, "at approximately five o'clock in the morning did you, by chance or otherwise, shoot at Officer John Frey?"

Gene responded, "I refuse to answer on the ground it may tend to incriminate me."

Gene took the blame off Huey and put it on himself by choosing to take the Fifth, and refusing to answer any further questions. Gene did not receive immunity for his testimony. He was found in contempt of court and sentenced to 30 days.

David Hilliard told me recently, "You know, I saw Gene about two weeks before he passed. He was trying to publish his memoirs. He had some physical ailments, and he had been sick. He had developed diabetes. After the 1967 incident and the '68 trial, where he saved Huey's life twice, Gene ... lived a life of complete humility. Gene was my hero."

When McKinney seized the time, Gene set a revolutionary example against the forces of racialism, colonialism, imperialism, and monopoly capitalism. Gene not only had street savvy, he had guts.

"He was brave and honorable, with street smarts beyond me, Huey and most of the people we knew," Hilliard said.

Gene will be missed by his family and friends. He leaves his children and many others to cherish his memory: Terrance McKinney of Monroe, LA; Rodney Anderson of Hayward, CA; Troya McKinney-Runnells of Vallejo, CA; and Gentamu McKinney of Atlanta, GA; grandsons Justin and Kevin, and two granddaughters, Deidra and Monique in Monroe; his brothers Peter McKinney, Charles McKinney, sisters Cynthia McKinney and Joann McKinney; a host of aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces. McKinney joins his parents and his brother James Bull McKinney, who preceded him in death, and a host of friends as well.

All power to the people!

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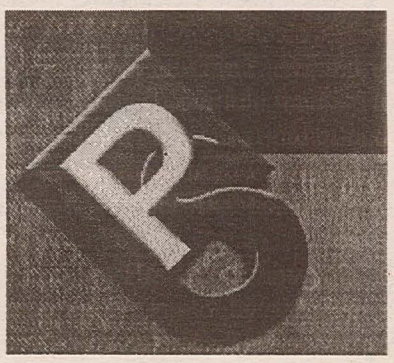
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BPP Intercommunal News

BPP school (survival program) destroyed the myth of the uneducable child.

Anti-Youth Laws

Continued from page 1

Third Eye Movement, another Bay Area-based youth organization founded in 1999, organized a protest on July 3, 2000 of over 150 high school and college students and local activists in front of San Francisco City Hall demanding a moratorium on Proposition 21's implementation in that city, where 62% of the voters opposed the law. Inside, the San Francisco Youth Commission's Juvenile Justice Committee met with the Board of Supervisors Public Health Committee members Michael Yaki and Barbara Kaufman to discuss the possible effects of a moratorium as a policy statement.

Learning Historic Lessons to Apply Today

"Many young people have rallied and come to the forefront of demonstrations and protests against Proposition 21," explains Dickson. "Some groups have filed lawsuits to challenge Proposition 21 as defensive measures resisting implementation, just as was done following passage of Proposition 187. But we must regroup and build a broad base of organized opposition while putting forward demands for what our people really need, as defined in the original BPP 10-Point Program. We must apply the hard-won political lessons learned from the history of the Black Panther Party and other movements for progressive change in our country.

"Do not allow a single grouping to become isolated and vulnerable to attack. Don't limit your contact to only those who look like you, sound like you — we must organize those who are not the ones who gain any of the profits from the prison industrial complex, but whose fear of crime and 'gangs' make them susceptible to the other side's scare tactics. We must defend people, help each other survive, while demanding eradication of their Draconian methods, by organizing to not allow the masses to become numb to the new situation.

"What today's situation demands is that the power of the youth must be carried by them with others of shared political conviction into the community, and not just their own communities, but those nearby, and any they can reach, to tell the truth and teach the unity of all working class people."

Noting that CCBPP has built a strong, positive presence in local Bay Area business communities through distribution of *The Commemorator* and CCBPP's "Build a Community-Based Economy" program, Dickson called for volunteers to join in expanding distribution of the paper and launching speaking tours as two means to get the truth out to the community and to expose the lies of the monopoly media and their candidates in office.

Dickson announced Proposition 21 would form one focus of CCBPP's campaign. "We need to stop the socioeconomic divisions, exploited by monopoly capital, which allow the other side to get larger portions of the voting population to support the 'Three Strikes, You're Out' law, gang injunctions, and mandatory minimum sentencing for minors treated as adults. Their laws have built the prison slave labor empire, of which Proposition 21 is just the latest brick in the wall."

Increased Murder and Warehousing of Youth

In January 2000, four men were executed in this country who were convicted for alleged murder when they were younger than 18. As recent as June 22, 2000 Shaka Sankofa (Gary Graham) of Texas fought for his life until he was put to death by the state of Texas. The Supreme Court refused to consider his appeal, despite the fact that he was only 17 years-old when convicted and was quite likely innocent of murder. (See page 5)

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports the number of youths under the age of 17 committed to adult prisons has more than doubled in 12 years, rising from 3,400 in 1985 to 7,400 in 1997. More than a quarter of the youths in adult prisons are between the ages of 13 and 16, according to an article by Steven Drizan and Stephen Harper (*The San Francisco Chronicle*, April 16, 2000, Page 4)

The United States Supreme Court has ruled a 1992 Chicago Anti-Gang Sweep Law, similar to Proposition 21, unconstitutional. This 1992 law made it illegal for anyone to stand on a Chicago street with someone suspected by the police to be a gang member. As a result, over 40,000 youth, mostly poor Black and Hispanic, were arrested.The Supreme Court ruled that this ordinance infringed on constitutionally protected rights of "freedom to loiter for innocent purposes."

As part of this national war on youth and so-called gang membership, huge databases have been established in several states, including California, for the purpose of collecting, storing and analyzing information about suspected gang members. Policemen, government agencies, as well as employers, often

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Ali Ar Rasheed, J.D.

Commemorator photo

Rap group* Dead Kennedys *performed political songs to an outraged, youthful audience at a February 2000 Anti-Proposition 21 rally held in downtown Oakland.

What is Prop 21?

Proposition 21, the "Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act," expanded police power in the state of California in ways that threaten youths' constitutional rights of association: a young person no longer has to be "primarily engaged in a criminal activity" to be arrested as a "suspected gang member," but rather can be seen associating with three or more mostly young people with common physical traits, symbols, or names that make them suspect for being engaged in criminal activity.

Proof of gang membership is no longer necessary for a young person to be charged with gang activity; the standard of legal proof for establishing a gang connection is lower under Prop. 21, which also expanded the death penalty for any gang-related murder. Prop. 21 expanded the list of "Three-strike" offenses for adults and youth, relaxed wiretapping law to allow wiretapping of anyone in contact with suspected gang members and allowed charges of conspiracy to be based on telephone contact.

Proposition 21 mandates prosecutors to try juveniles 14 years or older in adult courts for 30 specific offenses, allows the names of all children age 14 or older to be released to the public at the time of arrest and prohibits the sealing of juvenile records for a list of offenses. Felony offenses begin where damages of $400 result, as opposed to $50,000 under "Three-strike" law.

This latest so-called "anti-gang" law is an expansion of already existing California law, known as the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act of 1988 (STEP). STEP made membership in a gang an offense punishable by up to three years in state prison, legalized the process for determining who is a gang member and created new definitions of types of gang-related crimes. This law paved the way for 19 states which have since passed similar anti-gang "Sweep Laws" against loitering, cruising and curfew violations.

Likewise, states throughout the country have made prison construction a priority over education. In the last decade, California built only one new university, yet built 23 new prisons and has more people in its prisons than five top western industrial nations. "Proposition 21 totally changed the whole game. A 14 year-old can go directly to prison," said Jack Jacqua of the San Francisco Omega Boys Club, "and will add to this burgeoning forced labor pool.

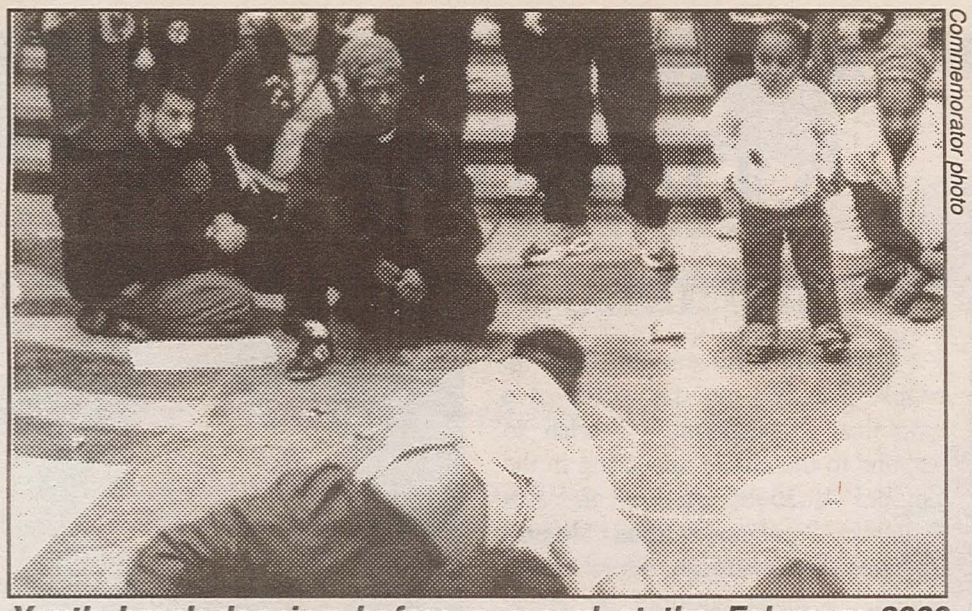
"There is no longer a '707,' where a young person got a [judicial] hearing as to whether he would be tried as an adult, as was the case before the passage of this dangerous and genocidal bill. 'Three Strikes' begins at 14 now. This is part of the warehousing mentality ... this not just an accident. Laws and policies are well planned by the enemy ...These kids need guidance and yet they build more prisons. The majority of these young brothers are losing to genocide which is very much orchestrated by the enemy."

The Act was spearheaded by former California governor Pete Wilson and backed and supported by the forces of international monopoly capital such as Atlantic Richfield, Chevron, TransAmerica, TWA, Victoria's Secret, Martin-Marietta, U.S. Technologies, and the Hilton Hotel who have the most to gain from prison labor. These are just a fraction of the businesses with investments and interests in the growth of the prison industrial complex that spreads across national boundaries. The prison industry is big business, earning at least $40 billion per year for multi-national corporations and their stockholders.

Proposition 21 was touted by law enforcement and media as an "anti-gang" law, yet a study published by American Youth Policy Forum, 2000, Washington D.C. shows a decrease in youth crime:

> Juvenile crime rates have gone down, not up. ...The juvenile homicide rate has declined by 52 percent so that it's at its lowest level since 1987. The combined rates for all serious violent offenses (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) declined 32 percent for youth ages 15-17 from 1994 - 98 and 27 percent for children 17 and under..

"The new legislation is simply another step in promoting racial bias and unfairly targeting low-income and minority youth," said Dickson.

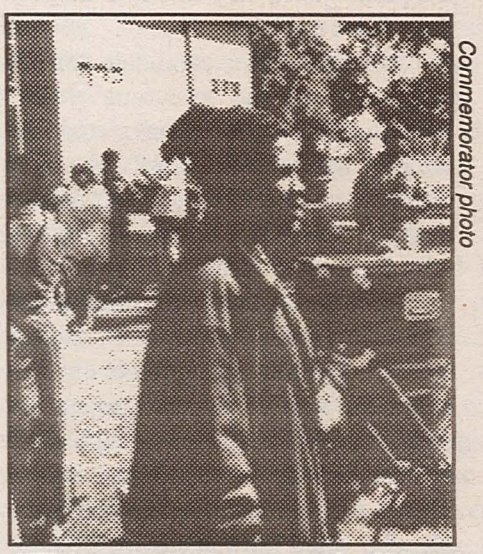


Commemorator photo

Youth break-dancing before a crowd at the February 2000 Anti-Prop 21 rally held in downtown Oakland.

use this information and data to categorize and criminalize thousands of American young people. Investigations in Denver, Colorado, have shown that eight out of every ten young people of color were listed in that city's gang-membership databases. In Cook County, Illinois, the gang database membership is two-thirds black, and in Orange County, California, over 90% of the listed gang members were non-white.

On May 11, 2000, the California State Supreme Court refused to consider a claim filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of the League of Women Voters of California, Children's Advocacy Institute and Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth that Proposition 21 was unconstitutional as presented to the voters because it unlawfully altered several existing laws. The ACLU then filed a lawsuit June 7, 2000 on behalf of the three organizations in San Francisco Superior Court against Governor Gray Davis, state Attorney General Bill Lockyer and San Francisco District Attorney Terence Hallinan to block enforcement of the law because it "confused voters" and violated the rule that a state initiatives cover only one subject.



Commemorator photo

"This country was built on slave labor. Proposition 21 is the same game with a new name," JR Valrey, Jr. of One Nation Committee.

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"Prop 21 Has Got To Go"

"Oh, no! Proposition 21 Has Got To Go," chanted the youthful protesters led by Pecolia Manigo, a Third Eye Movement organizer, as Jessica Smith of the San Francisco Youth Commission told *The Commemorator*, "We will continue these kinds of hearings throughout the city until we get the San Francisco Supervisors to adopt our proposal to make San Francisco a 'Prop. 21 Free Zone.' "

"The media and politicians purposely misinform the public with continued press coverage on juvenile violence," stated Boots (Ray Riley), a Bay Area hip-hop artist and activist. "The voting ballot did not explain what Proposition 21 was. It only said, 'Extend the sentences for rapists and murderers' or whatever. So, somebody who didn't know about it would have been, like, okay, yes, or something like that. Under the expansion of the 'Three Strikes' provisions of Proposition 21, a teenager can be sold into prison labor for writing graffiti — good news for those corporations building prisons across the country."

Analyze the Past to Change the Future

"The echoes of the failed tactics of the 1960's and 1970's are unmistakable," said Raymond Joe, former Black Panther Party member and CCBPP volunteer. "Those tactics — if taken alone — may be what people think of the Black Panther Party as having been about, but it was never what Huey said.

"The Black Panther Party was from the first designed to provide structure and leadership for the community, and that structure and leadership was not to be found in demonstrations themselves."

In 1967, in "The Correct Handling of Revolution," Huey Newton criticized the emulation of the LA Watts riots in East Oakland, which just made it easier for the police to contain and isolate the demonstrators. Instead Newton said the primary purpose of the party was to provide leadership and teach strategic methods of prolonged resistance. It would need a core of committed cadre, and its focus was not to be "protesters" — whether with Molotov cocktails or lawsuits — but to be aware of and work to meet the needs of the community, implementing the party's survival programs. Newton said the point is not to bring on the isolation of the youth, but to teach the youth to serve their community, so that the community will see them as their protectors.

"We have to transform not only our environment but broaden people's scope of view on the political situation and problems our communities — and working class communities throughout the world — face," continues Joe. "Most of us are in the same boat and we have to organize to get people of common political and economic interest to work together. The youth have been a vanguard in many revolutions, but to be a vanguard, as Huey pointed out, you have to have a disciplined, vanguard party. Especially *today* — in the 21st century — that movement has to include not just youth, and not just people of one color, but people from many different communities so that we extend revolutionary principles and perspective in diverse areas where people of different races and cultures live and work.

"We must extend and build revolutionary organizations, per Newton's theory of intercommunalism, into many different sectors all of whom share in common that they do not fall within the 1-3 percent on the top who directly benefit from the exploitations of international monopoly capitalism. Through survival programs, pending revolution, we must continue to unite and gain in strength.

"There is a story told in the pages of the August 1, 1970 issue of *The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service,* that set a good example we all can learn from even though it happened 30 years ago. The Jamaica, New York Black Panthers took part in establishing a farm worker service center to reach out to rural, black impoverished workers in Riverhead, New York. The comrades from the service center did not talk a lot of militant words, but took those words and sold the Party paper, not in West Oakland, not in the depths of Chicago's South Side, not in Harlem, but on the streets of a rural, farm worker town. And they gained an adherent each time they did. They built a farm worker service center in the midst of a hostile community polarized into migrant and seasonal farm workers on one side and growers and local sheriffs on the other."

Dickson called for a community education campaign to unite the community behind and through its own youth today. "Huey wrote about how the Party had become isolated from the community and insisted that the Party become involved with the institutions of the community — the churches and others.

"Today, we need to build non-cooptable programs that are structured in the various local communities, empowering the poor and middle income people, as the Black Panther Party began to build over three decades ago. The BPP was wiped out due to attacks from the government and the BPP's own mistakes that we have today learned from.

BPP Intercommunal News

People's Free Medical Research Health Clinic, headed by Dr. Tolbert Small, CCBPP Advisory Board member, provided medical treatment and preventive medical care for low income, minority families, as well as established a Sickle Cell Anemia Research Foundation.

"We are talking about not simply power politics, litigation, and unstructured, spontaneous mass force as the main form of struggle. Huey criticized such an approach as proven bankrupt by the mass demonstrations and use of litigation by the NAACP, SCLC and SNCC in the 1960's that brought about government poverty programs that were at odds with revolutionary goals and the BPP Ten Point Program. We called it 'Survival Pending Revolution' and worked to educate and provide structure within community-based survival programs and organizations at a community level that could not be bought off. This was *the main* form of struggle, building such an community infrastructure capable of rapid mobilization and precision of action.

"The community has even less structure and fewer institutions today than in the 1960's. We must build that through the youth. During the 1960s and 1970s, the Black Panther Party, through its community survival programs, embraced the youth with the organizing of free breakfast programs for school children. Many other youth programs not only fed hungry youth but also encouraged them to study and find out how their society affected them," stated Joe. This concept is explained in Huey Newton's speech at Boston College, delivered in November 1970:

> *The Ten Point Program is not revolutionary in itself, nor is it reformist. It is a survival program. That the people are threatened with genocide because racism and fascism are rampant in this country and the world, and that the ruling circle in North America is responsible. That we must change that through a total transformation of society, but until we can achieve that total transformation we must exist...We must first survive, therefore we need a survival kit: The Ten Point Program. It is necessary for our children to grow up healthy with functional and creative minds. They cannot do this if they do not get the correct nutrition.*

Continued on next page

BPP Intercommunal News

BPP's Free Breakfast Program was perhaps the organization's most influential community-wide activity and, as such, was potentially the greatest threat to efforts by authorities to neutralize and destroy the BPP and its tenets.

Anti-Youth Laws

Continued from previous page

We have a busing program. We call it The Bus for Relatives and Parents of Prisoners. We realize that the fascist regime that operates the prisons throughout America would like to do their treachery in the dark. But if we get the relatives, parents and friends to the prisons they can expose the treachery of the fascists. This too is a survival program.

Joe continued, "The Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program and Survival Program was about building that type of political movement; it was about oppressed communities finding ways to struggle in solidarity across the country against a common enemy, the international monopoly capitalist system whose very life depends on maintaining reactionary conditions worldwide. Back then there were the Young Lords, the Patriot Party, the Brown Berets, the Intercommunal Survival Committee, and many other organizations that espoused many of the goals of the Ten Point Program of the Black Panther Party.

Hutton Literacy Campaign

Continued from page 4

understanding in a society rampant with vicious racism and shattered dreams. Li'l Bobby demonstrated a grasp of the social ills which threatened not only his survival but that of Black people as well. He did not hesitate to step forward and confront the oppressive and archaic apparatus and conditions which threatened the Black community. He dared to place himself between the oppressors and his people, and by doing so, he made the supreme sacrifice. The Oakland Police Department murdered him on April 6, 1968. His memory shall never fade.

"While the government reports record budget surpluses and their political contributors like the oil companies report record profits," Dickson continued, "nothing materially is being done about the criminal lack of health care for low-income poor and minority people — they talk about the problem, but keep taking more care away. Over half of all high school students in Oakland never graduate, but there is no plan to solve that — instead we have public tax dollars being spent for the build-up of prisons and the expansion of police forces. These are the kinds of issues Li'l Bobby readily understood."

As one writer, Ishmael Reed, put it, "If you're illiterate, people can do anything they want to you: take your house through equity scams, cheat you, lie to you, bunk you, take your money, even take your life. Illiterate people get used in diabolical experiments such as the Tuskegee Program, in which unsuspecting black males were injected with syphilis by government's Dr. Mengeles."

"If you can help teach reading and writing and want to learn to organize and fight for the Black Panther Party Ten Point program, join our Bobby Hutton Literacy and Community Education Campaign today," urged Dickson. "One key to our ability to build this program is expanding *Commemorator's* distribution network locally and nationally and expanding *The Commemorator* subscription canvasses, run locally by CCBPP volunteers every Tuesday and Saturday. Through this you can learn to read, interview, report and edit for *The Commemorator*. Contact CCBPP about how you can participate in this program to build the Bobby Hutton Literacy and Community Education Campaign."

All power to the people!

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A Vote For Any "Joker" is a Dangerous Game

By Ruchell Cinque Magee

Courtesy of Ruchell C. Magee

Ruchell Cinque Magee, political prisoner since 1962.

Myth and truth are the same to people who rely on the words of a tyrannical government. I wish to respond to the article appearing in the October 4, 2000, issue of the *San Francisco Bay View*, entitled "Urgent! Register Two Million More Black Voters," a guest editorial by Hazel Trice Edney.

This article stated that "...at least 13 million Black voters could revolutionize American politics at the onset of the 21st century if they vote on election day November 7th.... 'Anyone who doesn't vote this year is a certified Uncle Tom of the highest order,' according to Reverend Al Sharpton."

I disagree with that belief on these grounds: since Richard Nixon's gang put him in the White House, the government has been freehandedly exploiting the people at will. Yes, leadership by racketeering has co-opted the Presidency.

Who am I and where do I get my information? I am the sole survivor of the August 7, 1970, Slave Rebellion in Marin County. For twenty or thirty minutes, after I joined the armed revolt instigated by Jonathan Jackson, I was the most free Black man in America. I used that time to penetrate the government's code of silence. It might well be said that I was the first to expose the continuing LAPD frame-up conspiracy that has been an ongoing reality since my first bogus "trial" in LA County in 1965.

Bill Clinton has been in the White House eight years and has yet to protest, or even mention, the wrongdoing by judges under organized crime leadership, practicing slavery under the guise of "justice."

Since the beginning of Al Gore and George W. Bush presidential campaign, neither has denounced the corruption run rampant in the US Criminal Justice system. Gore, in his position as Vice President, also failed to attempt the raise this subject. Gore knows that Blacks suffer from long years of deprivation. He uses the injured psychology of Blacks to deceive and to influence voters to vote against Bush, who is forthright in his unconcern for Blacks. Like Bill Clinton, Gore is attempting to use the hostility of the Republican Party toward the Black citizen to insure the continuity of his own power.

These career criminals, legislative games, and phony elections have planted seeds of this psychology so deep that millions of Blacks believer this crap and consider Clinton, and others, to be in their corner. Instead, these people are all evil; they think just the opposite of those working for good.

Other than speeches, what have these politicians done to show respect for the liberty of the poor as an inalienable right? Betraying public trust is a way of life for these evil characters. A vote for either George W. Bush or Al Gore is a vote for ongoing public exploitation!

All Black votes should direct toward "people's power," influencing the creation of an independent counsel to investigate both Bush and Gore's ties with corporate racketeering. These ties are systematically reducing the United States Constitution to applied deception. The public needs to get an independent counsel's finding on the damages caused by the bootlegged Congressional law styled "Anti-Terrorist," and signed into law by Bill Clinton in 1996.

This would call for stand-up and righteous people to visit and learn from political prisoners, prisoners of war, jail house lawyers and paralegals who do not suck up to the Bush/Clinton/Gore gang. Once brought out into the open, people fighting for good, will smash the credibility of these psychopathic liars to the point where they will fear to show their faces publicly.

What has either candidate done to step out of the previous years' exploitation of the Blacks and the poor by career politicians? The only difference is that Gore exploits behind a rubric of rhetoric and Bush exploits with little or no effort to hide.

Once again, the Anti-Terrorist and Effective Death Penalty Act, signed by Bill Clinton, has effectively co-opted the writ of habeas corpus; the most significant and meaningful tool against tyranny in the United States. This is a direct insult to the poor people who voted for that clown, Clinton.

Remove the media hype and you will find that every President since the

Continued on next page

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Mumia Update

Continued from page 3

Parliament. This brief criticized the trial court's refusal to allow John Africa to sit at the defense table to advise Mumia, pointing out that such lay advisors are a basic right in English law, which is the foundation of American jurisprudence, and concluding that the trial Court erred by not allowing Mumia to represent himself.

The fourth brief, from the Chicana/Chicano Studies Foundation, declared that the right of a citizen to represent himself before the power of the State is a fundamental one, arising from precedent predating the Republic's founding.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a world-renowned political prisoner who was targeted by the FBI for surveillance, harassment and arrest for his political activism and membership in the Black Panther Party and steadfast defense of poor and minority workers in their fight against police brutality, poverty and other aspects of the institutional racism that exists in his native Philadelphia and elsewhere in the country. With unprecedented speed for a murder case in which scant evidence existed against him, Mumia was convicted of the 1981 killing of Philadelphia policeman, Daniel Faulkner. The initial arrest and subsequent imprisonment of Mumia to silence his militant, penetrating and truthful journalistic voice, was headed by then-Philadelphia District Attorney Ed Rendell, who later became Mayor of Philadelphia and gained notoriety for his role in the 1985 MOVE bombing in which Philadelphia and state police killed six adults and five children and razed two entire blocks of row-houses. Rendell was recently rewarded for his work by being appointed Chairman of the National Democratic Party.

Commemorator photo

Thousands demonstrate in Los Angeles at last summer's National Democratic Convention to demand a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Mumia may or may not be spared by the forces that framed him. It is becoming increasingly clear to all who follow Mumia's case as example, that the US legal system is not a "level playing field." The Free Mumia Coalition and other progressive, legal, worker and other organizations from every continent are fighting to level that field through mass action in the hopes that the continued persecution of Mumia will be considered too high a political price for the forces of the opposition to pay and that his life, this time, will be spared.

The Commemorator has steadfastly reported on the international organizing efforts to save Mumia and all political prisoners, and to end the prison slave labor complex, and urges all those interested in learning how to organize and build organization that can permanently change the conditions that continue to oppress us to call *The Commemorator* today. Together we can change the nature of our legal, economic and political system forever by putting it in the hands of the people.

Huey's Oakland Trial

Continued from page 11

the old-style southern lynching. My attorneys had investigated Frey's background, and they found a long history of harassing and mistreating Black people and making racist statements about Blacks and to Blacks. Unfortunately for Frey, his habits boomeranged that time. I do not know what happened because I was unconscious, but things did not work out as he wanted or expected them to. I guess he thought that if he could bring me in dead, he would be given a promotion....

The trial caused much grief and worry to my family. They wanted to save me, but I felt death was ahead, and my main concern was the community. Because my family continued to hope, I could not tell them this, however, and I was very moved by their faith and support. In fact, the only strain I felt during the trial was the pull between trying to comfort my family and carrying out the political activities I knew were necessary. I has all worked out for the best now, but at the time it was a tremendous weight on my family, and on me.

Another matter of concern was whether to reveal to my attorneys the name of Gene McKinney, my passenger on the night the incident went down. Gene had never been apprehended by the police, despite a diligent search. What is more, they did not even know his name. From the start, the police had cleared Gene, and Heanes had testified before the grand jury that my companion had not taken part in any violence. Right after I was captured, the police sent broadcasts all through California saying they had apprehended the "guilty" party and they wanted the passenger to come in for questioning. They repeatedly said in these broadcasts that the passenger had nothing to do with the incidence. I suspected that they wanted to use him against me, and at first I refused to give his name to my attorneys. I saw no point in involving Gene, even though I knew his testimony my help free me. Only when my lawyers had convinced me that legally the prosecution could not do anything to him did I agree to reveal Gene's identity. From my own knowledge of the law, I became aware that the courts were powerless to hurt him. However, Gene was skeptical. When my lawyer finally met him, they explained very carefully that he could not be hurt by testifying for the defense, and he did eventually testify despite his doubts. This showed supreme courage on his part, because the prosecutors were not above pulling some trick to involve him.

All Power to the People

Ruchell Magee

assassination of Kennedy is a "Republicrat." There is no significant difference between the "parties." Clinton was not an exception; rather he was the essence of the animal. The Presidential election is a flimflam game. The US is more of a one-party system than Soviet Russia ever was. Here you get the choice between two corporate capitalists. Who represents the people?

The District Attorney of Los Angeles County found physical evidence of LAPD frame-ups, which I have been demonstrating to judges for 37 years from a prison cell. DA Dan Murphy could make one phone call to the Superior Court Judge in Kings County (where I am presently being held), and state the facts in my case and I would be released immediately. I hold evidence that the jury in my trial acquitted my person on a kidnap charge for which I have been held since 1975! These lowballs concealed that verdict since then, and now have yet another tool, in the form of the ATEDP Act..

I have current legal action pending regarding the suspension of habeas corpus before the Supreme Court in Washington, DC, entitled *Magee* vs *Louisiana*, No. 00-5555.

Knowing the truth, Blacks who do not vote for either Bush or Gore can easily refute the Uncle Tom label of Rev. Sharpton by showing the self-respect to refuse and resist this clown show. The people who vote only prove themselves victims of the low-ball political deceptions of those who have placed themselves above the standards of civilized people. Those labeled "Uncle Toms" may rightfully ask:

1) Which segment of the community will be the next to have their Constitutional rights taken?

2) Where is the self-respect in voting for Bush and Gore, and what is right about participating in a known scam against the American people?

You show Black people a responsible election campaign uncontrolled by the corporate racketeers and we will vote with a smile and not fear. One non-vote (principled stand for one's self-respect) carries more weight than a White House full of surfacing lies. Self-respect is a right! Fear of these cowards is an injustice to self. Build to Win.

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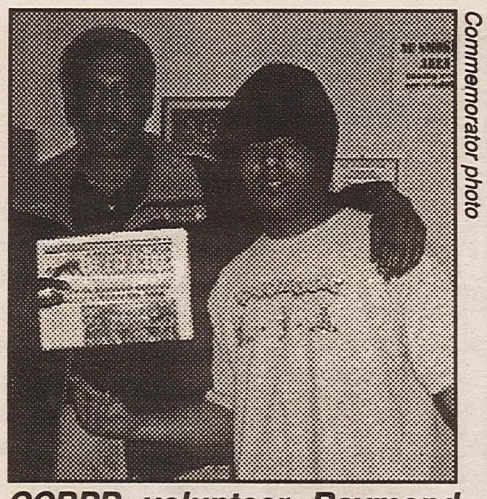

Commemorator photo

CCBPP volunteer Raymond Joe and Boots display the Commemorator.

Artist Corner: Boots Speaks

Continued from page 8

BOOTS: Being involved with community work came first, so, whatever I did was gonna involve a political awareness. It was gonna involve trying to make a movement, or being a part of a movement that's already out there. So, you know, if I wasn't involved in the community, I probably wouldn't have had the drive to become a rapper in the first place. On the other hand, if I was someone who had the drive to become a rapper in the first place, and then decided politics to be the genre I wanted to go into because I liked it a little bit more, I probably wouldn't have had the foundation to stay rapping as I am. I probably wouldn't have had the foundation to go through all the trials and tribulations it takes, just to maintain while you're in the music business. So, I think the politics grounded me, made me have a choice of what to do. It happened to be that rapping was a thing that I already had some skills at. Even when I decided to become a rapper, I knew that I was weak at the time, but because I thought it was necessary, I did whatever I could to study it, to practice, to get better, to take criticism, and use it to change. I don't think I would have grown as much as a rapper if I had just been like the bourgeois sense of an artist. Like, just listen to what I'm doing and you know, it is a part of me, so therefore, you have to listen to what I'm saying. I took it from the standpoint of, if people ain't listening, I'm not doing something right. It's the same way with organizing. If people ain't responding to what you're doing, then you must not be talking. You must not be meeting the needs of the people. You must not have your fingers on the pulse of the people.

COMMEMORATOR: In an article printed in *The Source* magazine, it was mentioned that you were socially and politically conscious, even in high school [1980s]. At such a young age, how did you become motivated to do political work, or how did you get grounded in your political beliefs?

BOOTS: Well, they started saying, Hey, do you want to come to these youth rallies or these meetings? We're going to go canvass in Santa Cruz at canneries and we're going to pass out flyers.

I said, "Hell, no! That doesn't sound like fun." Everyone was getting into a van, and there was a bunch of girls so I got in the van. It was very social; especially right now the social and the political are not necessarily different. But once I did start coming around, then I was able to hear the ideas and think about them. It wasn't one thing; it took a little while before things began to make sense. I was about 14. So by the time I was 15, I was all the way into it. I remember one summer I attended the Sound Project, where we went down to Delano and another place called MacFarlane. We were helping to organize a farm workers union. Involving myself in that, being in a place where no one knew me, allowed me to overcome the fear of going up to someone and handing them a flyer, or selling them a paper. Whereas, living here [in the urban city] you know, as a teenager, you like don't want to be out here selling papers. You know. (Laughs)

"There are companies that are in the Black community that could be paying $15 or more an hour, such as McDonalds or K-Mart, or whatever."

They gave us responsibilities like organizing a canvass. I was able to take those skills back to the neighborhood, and when problems came up, even though I stopped being involved, I would be like "we could do this, or we could do that." It [the earlier involvement] gave me ideas of what could be done. Later, I got involved and it came to a head at Oakland High. Some of the school administrators had decided to do year-round schools. No one wanted to go to school year-round. Then we found out that they were actually doing year-round school, and that they were going to do tracking, where and when you came in. If you were remedial, you were going to remain remedial. They used less books and it cost less money and they crowded more people into the school. At that time Skyline was mainly all white, 90% white. So we did a walk out. Out of 2200 students, 2000 walked out, who not only just didn't show up, but who went to class, didn't sign in and just walked out of the school in the morning. Now it's different; they aren't doing the year-round schools at Skyline.

COMMEMORATOR: What kind of organizing are you doing now and what's going on with the Young Comrades? [Editors Note: *Young Comrades was a collective consisting of a number of hip-hop groups and rap artists, of which Boots and the Coup were a part. Before the Coup became a part of the Young Comrades, they were with the Mau Mau Rhythm Collective. CCBPP in its earlier days (1991 and 1992) organized youth talent shows in collaboration with the Mau Mau Rhythm Collective which including the Coup*]

BOOTS: The Young Comrades doesn't exist anymore but everybody is doing things in different coordination and in different organizations. The latest thing I was involved in is the No on Prop. 21 Campaign and I've been confiding in some of the workshops we've been doing, which are art and organizing workshops, at the Black Dot Cafe [in East Oakland, where there are poetry readings and rappers perform].

What we've been doing? Well, first we recorded an album, just rappers. We recorded the whole album in one day, where everyone is rapping about Proposition 21 and, you know, to stop it. We gave away those albums for free, kind of like newspapers on tape, and then we rented this flatbed truck, put a PA system on it, got it generated and did concerts on it. So, we'd pull up in front of a high school, and as the students were leaving, we'd rap. Everybody's rapping on the flat-bed-truck, concerts, and we would register whomever we could register to vote, give out our flyers and give out all the information about the No on Proposition 21 Campaign. Then, we started going in the neighborhoods, like on nice days, and on the weekends, you know. We would be driving slowly through the neighborhood while people were still rapping about it and people would be coming out of their house hollering, "Yeh, yeh!" and jumping on the truck saying, "Let me say something!" Up until February, we were registering people. We were experimenting with different ways of using the art, to actually have a function where you make something, you know exactly what you're trying to get, or encourage people to do.

COMMEMORATOR: When you first began as a rapper, a political rapper, a political organizer, what were some of the challenges you faced in the music industry?

BOOTS: Well, first of all when we got signed, it was only out of luck because Oakland was blowing up at that time and all of the labels wanted an act from Oakland. First, we came out on Too Short's DJ's label and we had a song on his album. Then we put out our own EP and that EP sold 1000 in Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco. Our first single that came out was "Not Yet Pretty." But it had a slow, rolling base line and music critics don't seem to listen to the lyrics as much as they do the music, they like all this gangsta rap, which I was hell-of-mad at at first, but in hindsight, I saw where that was the best kind of thing to happen. It caused a lot more people to listen that would not have listened if they thought it was conscience, or political rap. We also ended up having a little bit of both on our stuff.

We always had people that were listening to it for music that would maybe buy it, other kinds of rap that call themselves gangsta rap, and then also we had the people that wanted to hear something conscious and political. Like this was how we were going to march in tune. They wanted to put out something like an ex-Klan, or something like that, and I knew that relates to the people who already thought of themselves as conscious and that's who I was not trying to talk to necessarily. That's not where I saw the need at. We would have that problem and then we also had the problems that we face that, for instance, on our video we had some of the most censured groups just for political content.

COMMEMORATOR: You mentioned earlier your work in organizing the No on Prop 21 Campaign, which, as you know, passed in the California election by over 60%. So, what's your take on that, where do you think that's going to go in terms of young people, and the future of young people?

BOOTS: Well, I think it just shows that they're getting to this stage of "We don't care that you know that we're against you." Cause, it's a stage where they are kinda in a recouping stage where they need to fire other people, where they want to use less and less of the government money to appease people. They want to do that so that they can go out and get money all over the place and use their laws and regulations to make money. They're at a point where they don't care. They say, "fuck it if it doesn't seem like a democracy. They're at a point where they are not going to make it seem like everyone has a fair chance. They can make more money doing that, I think that is what's going on."

While it's a two-sided thing, they make more money but it makes it very hard to organize because now they can round up people for just standing on the corner. You know that law [Prop 21] went into effect a week after it passed. So there's already people with cases. But at the same time, as for hip-hop organizers, it makes it a bit clearer for us, because there's more contrast and people can see what's going on. At the same time, there were a lot of young people who were already aware. So it presents an opportunity for us to get some organizing going.

COMMEMORATOR: Where are we as a society when a thing like Prop 21 can pass [in California] with over 60% of the vote? What are people thinking about?

BOOTS: What's funny is that the Bay Area has this idea of being liberal, but it was only voted against something like 54% to 46% in Alameda County. While there were a lot of people against it out here, and there were definitely a lot campaigning against it out here, it shows that there are a lot of people who

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Criminal Risk Factors

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lurks as a shadow in America's pre-constitutional and constitutional founding documents. It appears in the provisions of the Articles of Confederation (of the thirteen original colonies), which specifically deny the poor and homeless the full panoply of rights, privileges and immunities accorded first class citizens, and in Article I, Section 2 [3] which states "Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States included within this Union ... which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians, not taxed, three-fifths of all other Persons." Since the vast majority of Afro-Americans in the United States at the time were slaves, they were counted as only three-fifths of a person according to the Constitution, until Amendment XIV was passed in 1868.

Federal courts and state legislatures alike have rendered legal decisions and/or passed new laws based on the second premise that individual criminal inclination is accurately predicted and determined by membership in a class or group, whose criminal inclination has already been prejudged.

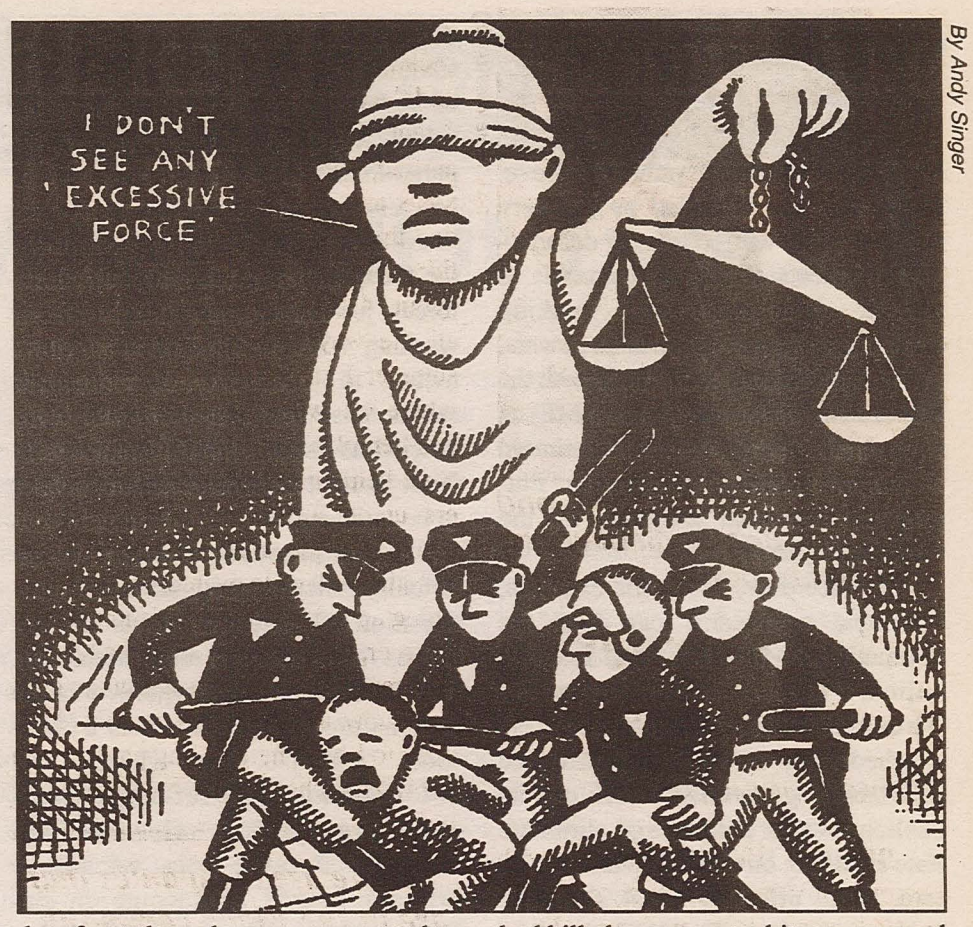
In 1997, Massachusetts passed "An Act Relative to the Enhancement of Forensic Technology" which created a statewide DNA registry requiring prisoners and parolees to undergo forced DNA extraction. This act also mandated future convicted felons to submit blood samples to the state. Forty-seven other states have established similar DNA data bases. The United States Department of Justice has offered the economic incentive of block grants of $172,000 or more for states that enact DNA statutes.

These class, group and race-based theories of criminality also lurk just beneath the surface of government-funded attempts to demonstrate the existence of biological factors which predispose individuals to crime:

In 1996, Massachusetts authorized appropriation of funds for the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, Division of Capital Planning and Operations, which

> [P]rovided further, that the department of correction, in conjunction with the department of public health and department of education, shall conduct a study into the biological causes of crime based on the premise that scientists have been studying biological risk factors which they believe predispose individuals to criminal behavior; provided further that said study should incorporate these findings to work toward a more effective approach toward criminology...(1996 Massachusetts Acts 12, item 1102-8969)

The phrase "biological factors" may be fairly understood to be a code phrase for "poor, lower income and minorities." This rings true in light of the fact that the government has already officially stated the following: class and race accurately predict and determine criminal inclination; most violent crimes and murders are committed by lower and lower middle class persons, especially Negroes; criminal group membership classification is sufficient to determine criminal inclination.



By Andy Singer

Class, Race, Parole and Criminal Justice Policy

The premises of class, race and criminal group membership classification infect American parole and criminal justice system decision-making at every turn. They determine deployment; how many police will be assigned in which communities. This, in combination with how police are indoctrinated to view communities in which they are assigned, determines both the number and nature of arrests, as well as the tactics that police employ.

These police tactics include: illegal follows, stops, detention, searches, seizures, arrests, Rodney King-and Abner Louima-type beatings and Amadou Diallo-type multiple gunshot wound assassinations of unarmed civilians. These tactics are sanctioned against the lower economic classes and racial minorities. The Charles Stuart affair several years ago in Massachusetts was a prime example. Stuart murdered his pregnant wife, Carol, shot himself, then called police and blamed it all on a Black man, later falsely claimed by Stuart to be Willie Bennett.

Using *Blitzkrieg* tactics that would have evoked the envy of Hitler's German State Police (*GESTAPO*), police, having been told a Black man had killed a pregnant white woman and wounded her husband, kicked in doors, broke up furniture, strip-searched people in public (including women), in the low-income Black community, all without warrants. It later turned out that Stuart had killed his wife and then shot himself.

A recent *New York Daily News* poll of 100 young African-American and Latino men found that 81 had been stopped and frisked by police. A National Criminal Justice Commission (NCJC) study determined that, relative to population size, about five times as many African-Americans as whites are arrested for less serious index crimes and three times as many for less serious crimes (less serious index crimes forming the bulk of arrests flooding the criminal justice system). The study said that in Maryland, the profile of a drug trafficker included an African-American driving a luxury car on the interstate highway.

U.S. District Court Judge for the First Circuit, the Honorable Nancy Gertner, as reported in the *Massachusetts Lawyer's Weekly*, (Vol 27, No. 17), denied a request by the U.S. Attorney in Boston to impose a stiffer sentence on an African-American defendant, based on numerous prior motor vehicle violations. The Judge relied on the well-established fact that police generally consider race as legitimate grounds for suspicion and routinely follow, stop, detain and search African-American motorists on this basis. Viewing the defendant's record as tainted by institutionalized racialism, Judge Gertner counter-weighted this factor in her sentencing decision.

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Columbia

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have the American public believe. Rather the war is fueled by the very political elite who continue decades-old precedents of selling Colombia to foreign investors, and making devil's bargain with imperialist powers. Colombia has made such deals with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in return for assurances of continued "economic growth," which is an illusion for the vast majority of the Colombian people.

In December, 1999, for example, Colombia received a loan from the International Monetary Fund for $2.7 billion, with strings known as "structural adjustment policies" attached. The strings mandated the Colombian government sell off its publicly-owned utilities and eliminate state spending on education and health care, in an effort to boost its Gross National Product. The IMF also prescribed elimination of minimum wage laws and labor codes in order to better appeal to foreign investors by instituting their latest tactics to break the back of any organized labor movement. These policies appear to have paid off, as the Los Angeles-based oil company, Occidental Petroleum, is now eager to begin drilling for an estimated 1.5 billion barrels of crude oil.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and ELN (*Ejercito de Liberación Nacional* or National Liberation Army of Colombia) were already active on U'wa lands. They oppose this kind of imperialist-controlled economic development. Last year, press reports claimed that the FARC killed three American environmentalists who were working with the U'wa. Both groups have reportedly been instrumental in upsetting oil-drilling development, bombing pipelines and extorting payments from oil-field workers.

The remainder of this latest Colombian aid package will go toward "peace and humanitarian efforts" aimed at returning "the sense of security to all Colombians." These elements of Plan Colombia outline government-led strategies for so-called alternative agricultural development (8 percent of the US package), human rights programs (6 percent), aid to peoples who will be displaced by upcoming military actions (4 percent), judicial reforms (2 percent), and lastly, the continuing "peace process" between the Colombian government, the leftist guerrilla groups, and the right-wing paramilitary groups (1 percent of the aid).

That the Colombian government is fighting leftist guerrilla groups is not new; since the 1960s such groups as FARC, established in 1966, and ELN, founded in 1965, have been fighting against political, economic, and social injustices perpetuated by the Colombian government and imperialists, the US in particular.

The drug war itself is hardly new, either. Struggling Latin American countries have received hundreds of billions of dollars in the past two decades marked for the purpose of stemming the trafficking of illicit narcotics such as cocaine and heroin. This money has largely gone to military or paramilitary forces, and, quite often, has returned to the pockets of United States arms manufacturers who provide the weaponry (and training) for these forces, just as they did in the 1960s in working with the Colombian government to destroy the peasant self-defense movement, which they decried as "states within the state" or "independent republics" that were not to be tolerated.

In the meantime, little is done to actually halt the production and distribution of narcotics. Fields of coca leaves are sprayed with herbicide, but, as reports find, wherever such regions are sprayed, there is a "balloon effect" in which the coca-growing and refining operations are quickly relocated and resumed. Because coca remains a primary source of income in the nation, the guerrilla groups, the paramilitary groups, and the Colombian government and military have all been reported to have had a hand in the trafficking of cocaine, tying the civil war inextricably to the drug trade.

The FARC acts as both tax collector and defender of many of the small-scale growers, including coca growers, taking a portion of the farmers' incomes to fund their military campaign against the government, and in return provide some "protection" for the small farmers, or campesinos, who today are largely located in the northern regions of Colombia.

The paramilitaries are high-tech and well-funded guns-for-hire, allied with the Colombian government, and often receiving income from the military. It is these paramilitary groups which, according to Human Rights Watch, are responsible for 78 percent of the human rights abuses on record. The paramilitaries offer protection to the larger-scale coca plantations, as well as providing defense to the wealthy landowners (*latifundistas*) and businessmen who can afford their services.

The stated purpose of Plan Colombia is to cripple the FARC and ELN by devastating the coca-growing regions which they control, and in so doing, end their source of income, eliminate the narcotics trade at the base of production, and bring about the peace and stability which the Colombian government is supposedly seeking. Yet even the most detailed and unbiased reports of FARC and ELN spending indicate that drug related income accounts for at most 30 percent of their budgets. Eradicating what amounts to less than a third of their source of income would do little to debilitate FARC operations. And as the coca in the territory under FARC and ELN control is cultivated on small plots of land, less than three hectares in size, the highest density coca-farmlands (those that are in the hands of large plantation owners protected by the paramilitaries which are in part funded by the Colombian military) are being virtually ignored by the Colombian and US governments alike.

In addition to the money being made by the Colombian military and government from the trafficking of drugs, and the sweet return deal for US defense contractors such as General Dynamics (the makers of the 2,000 round-per-minute, helicopter-mounted machine guns being sold to the Colombian military), the Colombian government stands to make money off of the foreign direct investments which will be made possible by the armed clearing of northern lands.

In light of these very real facts, it becomes clear why President Pastrana's US-backed Plan Colombia intends to focus its efforts on northern Colombia. It also demonstrates the source of both Colombian and US lawmakers' desires to use military force to remove the FARC and ELN. Not only does the big-money defense contracting lobby stand to make a buck, but prior to the November election, both Presidential hopefuls stated they saw the potential profits if the Colombian military can rid the country of the guerrillas in the name of peace.

Some of the lawmakers on Capitol Hill might actually believe that they were doing their part in fighting the international scourge of narcotics trafficking when they passed the $1.3 billion aid package last June. Just as Clinton no doubt believes what he is saying when he tells the American people that "this is not Yankee imperialism," nor is this a military commitment, as was Vietnam. Perhaps he's right. After all, the power elites in both nations stand to make a lot more money from the continued bloodshed than in all the years of Vietnam combined.

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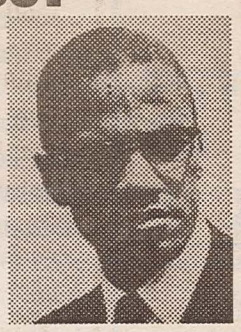

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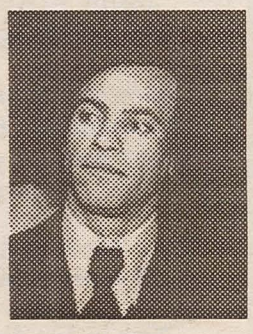

Black History is Labor History

"We are aware that many of us are the descendants of those who were dispossessed of their lands to permit capitalism to flourish. We are aware that many of us are the descendants of those who were captured and enslaved so that their labor could build the wealth of this nation."
Huey P. Newton.

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Youth/Poverty

Continued from page 2

But they really don't help children by taking them away from their parents. A mother had her son taken care of by the grandmother and he was perfectly fine. But CPS took him away. They said that the grandmother was unfit to take care of the child. They had no evidence that the grandmother neglected the child."

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) receives $25 billion dollars a year in federal funding under CAPTA (not including incentive bonuses), yet 95% of the children taken by the CDSS are taken from low-income and minority parents, who face the threat of being fired if they miss work for any cause, including legal appointments, and who lack the resources to hire competent counsel. CDSS on the other hand, receives money every time it takes children away from their parents. Bonuses were introduced as financial incentive to adoptions as a provision within the 1997 Adoptions and Safe Families Act, and were first proposed by the Clinton Administration's "Adoption 2002" initiative.

There are no comprehensive programs in place for working families to address the widespread problems of lack of child-care, affordable housing, medical care, or living-wage employment.

Politicians, supported by the media, claim these programs and laws are to "protect the family," or are "the best [programs] for the children." The media meanwhile sensationalizes crimes being committed by low-income and minority children while ignoring the economically impoverished conditions their parents are forced to contend with due to state and federal laws such as workfare, where parents can't make enough to support their families, are working multiple jobs and cannot even see their children very often.

National Case In Point

One recent national news story is evidence of this skewed presentation of the problem to the American population. According to Tamarta Owens of Mount Morris Township, Michigan, whose six year-old son allegedly shot and killed a first-grade classmate on February 29, 2000, the television, radio and newspaper stories ignored the fact that Owens had been evicted, pushed off welfare and was working two jobs to make ends meet when the incident occurred.

Workfare is a Death Blow to Children

In January 1999, a month before the shooting, Owens was required to work as part of Michigan Governor John Engler's effort to get people off welfare pursuant to the 1996 federal welfare reform (workfare) law. Owens found two part-time jobs at a mall about 35 miles from her Mount Morris Township home just north of Flint. The commute required taking two buses each way. On some days she left home at 8:30 a.m. and did not return until 11 p.m. During those days, family members and friends watched the children while she was gone, Owens said. Then, eight days before the school shooting, she was evicted for falling behind on the rent. Owens said she couldn't find another affordable place, so she sent her sons to her brother's house and her daughter to her sister's. She didn't say where she stayed herself. "Sometimes a single mother is all kids have, and if you take that single mother from them, then they have nothing," she told *The New York Times* (March 21, 2000).

The federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRAWORA), signed by President Bill Clinton, has forced children, mothers and the elderly into poverty and slave labor jobs, because most workfare workers do not find jobs and are being removed from the welfare rolls. Those who do find work end up with low-paid, minimum wage or below-minimum wage jobs. The average American worker works 14.5 hours a day, typically at more than one job. United States workers today are working harder than workers in any other advanced industrial nation and they are working for less money, have fallen deep in debt, and cannot provide child care because both spouses must work.

Dr. Huey P. Newton called this approach revolutionary intercommunalism, pooling our energies and our resources together in a way that will strengthen us as a class, building a comprehensive strategy for the Ten Point Program.

Workfare, as such, is really a labor law, because its main effect has been to throw millions of welfare recipients into the job market, competing with each other for low-paying, subsurvival level, part-time and temporary jobs. It creates a huge pool of cheap labor for national and international companies and this weakens — and often breaks — any power organized labor has retained until now. Working for a welfare check, with no rights as a worker while you do the same work as a regular employee, is a form of slavery, and yet it has been aggressively instituted by both major political parties and is one manifestation of institutionalized racialism in the US today.

California Proposition 21 Tries Youths as Adults

Unless we organize to change the current nationwide get-tough-on-youth-crime movement, children like Owen's six year-old will soon be tried, and punished, as adults.

California's Proposition 21, passed in March 2000, already mandates that law enforcement officials arrest, try and imprison children as young as 14 as adults. At least 14 other states have similar youth crime bills which reverse principles established in the United States 100 years ago (and recognized throughout the world) which differentiated children from adults due to developmental differences and established that child offenders should be educated and rehabilitated rather than punished.

In November 1999, the US Supreme Court ruled that a 13 year-old youth, Nathaniel Abraham, be sentenced as an adult after he was convicted of second degree murder by the state of Michigan. According to his attorneys Nathaniel, age 11 at the time he was charged with first-degree murder, was playing with a .22 caliber rifle, firing randomly at trees in an open field a block from his house. One of the shots apparently hit Ronnie Greene, an 18 year-old Black stranger. It was reported in the October 31, 1999 *New York Times,* by Keith Bradsher "that the prosecution may be partly motivated by race, an accusation denied by prosecutors. Nathaniel is black, as was Greene. A 14-year-old white boy is said to have been shooting with Nathaniel when bullets flew past the neighbor, but was not with Nathaniel at the time of the fatal shooting and has not been charged with any crime. The boy is expected to testify for the prosecution."

Already, 80% of all US prisoners are from low-income neighborhoods, and many are from single-parent families. In the African-American community, as of 1996, for example, almost 60% of all children under 18 live with their mothers only, (National Data Book, p. 67 [117th ed.] Hoover's Business Press.) These are the poorest households in America. This poverty is institutionalized by the fact that millions of actual (and potential) income earners have been removed by the criminal justice system because they didn't have money and resources to defend themselves against the US' criminal unjust system.

Genocide was defined by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (adopted in 1948) as *"acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group ..." including:*

(a) killing members of the group;

(b) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; ...

(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

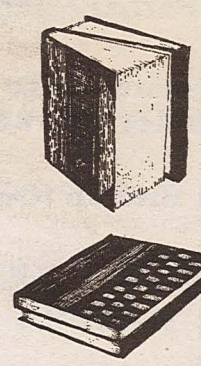
We must join together and stop the genocidal policies and programs poor and minority families are facing right now in the United States pursuant to federal and state so-called "Child Protection Laws," and "anti-youth" laws. Any real solution lies in our ability to build a community-based economy, uniting the many on the basis of real economic needs. We know the few whose wealth and power is historically based on the status quo — profiting and building their power on the backs of child and adult slaves — are not going to just stand by idly as we take back the economy which is rightfully ours.

CCBPP is building an expanded version of the Black Panther Party Survival and Community Education programs publicized through The Commemorator and needs full and part-time volunteers to help with production and distribution of the paper, canvassing the business community, speaking engagements at schools, churches and throughout the community and reviving the BPP literacy campaign.

Dr. Huey P. Newton called this approach revolutionary inter-communalism, pooling our energies and our resources together in a way that will strengthen us as a class, building a comprehensive strategy for the Ten Point Program.

All power to the people!

werecat



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Criminal Risk Factors

Continued from page 19

The NCJC study found that institutional racialism is a motivating factor, generating more arrests which reinforce the race component and the class-race theory of criminality. At birth, an African-American male has almost an 80% probability of arrest at least once in his lifetime, with a 51% probability, nationally, that it will be a felony arrest. A Jacksonville, Florida study found a 76% probability for African-American males, at birth, of at least one arrest before age 36.

A California study confirmed that police make unfounded arrests (arrests where the suspect is innocent, the evidence is inadequate or it was obtained by illegal search or seizure) in the case of African-Americans and Latinos, at sharply higher rates than in the case of whites. The rate of unfounded arrests in California is four times higher for African-Americans and two times higher for Latinos than for whites. In urban areas,the statistics are even worse: unfounded arrests are twelve times higher for African-Americans than for whites in Oakland, seven times higher in Los Angeles and six times higher in San Diego.

The NCJC and other studies on criminology and criminal law found that African-Americans and non-white Latinos are significantly discriminated against at every critical stage in the criminal justice system. This includes decision making as to: what offenses to charge, i.e., downgrade, upgrade, drop specific charges or the entire case; whether to grant bail, how high to set bail and/or incarcerate prior to trial; whether a plea bargain or sentence will be more or less favorable; whether the death penalty will be sought or imposed; if, whether and to what extent rehabilitative programs will be available; and whether or when parole will be granted.

The NCJC demonstrated that racial discrimination increased between arrest and incarceration. The fact that African-Americans are arrested at a rate three times higher than whites implies that African-Americans would be incarcerated at a rate three times higher than whites if the level of discrimination remained the same. But African-Americans are incarcerated at a rate seven times higher than whites, showing that the rate of discrimination is two and one third times greater at the incarceration level, demonstrating a multiplier effect.

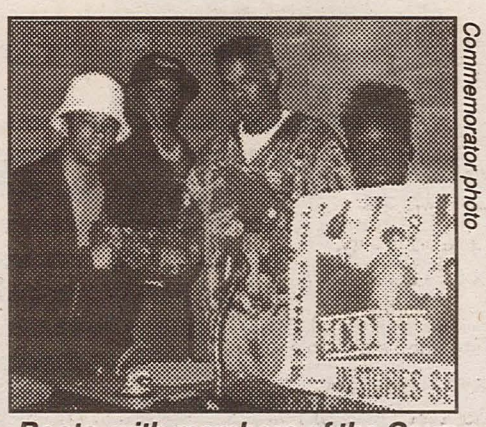
The case of former Massachusetts Parole Board member, Terence McArdle, as reported by the Boston Globe, points to institutional racial discrimination. He was forced to resign after a firestorm erupted over his admitted use of racial slurs against minority agents during his tenure as head of the Boston Office of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF). This, combined with revelations regarding his status as the target of a related perjury investigation and a prisoner complaint regarding McArdle's use of racial slurs during parole hearings, formed a critical mass requiring that he become the sacrificial lamb, lest there be further probing into institutional racialism.

It is apparent to honest, objective people that the over 50 million criminal records and dossiers held by authorities are substantially tainted and generated, in relevant part, by institutional economic class and racial discrimination. It is equally apparent that institutional class and racial discrimination plays a decisive role in shaping the economic, political, law enforcement and overall social conditions which appear most frequently in poor, lower-income and minority communities. It is the statistical reflection of these conditions, which appears as much of the substance and content of criminal offender record information, on which parole decisions are based.

For example, almost one-half of all young black men in Los Angeles are listed in the county's gang member data-base, according to a Los Angeles District Attorney's Office report, Gangs, Crime and Violence in Los Angeles. Concerned legal professionals, affected community organizations and residents point to the fact that these gang membership identifications very often rest on no more than: how a person dresses, walks, talks, who they associate with (including their own family), where a person lives or spends time and their race or ethnicity. Reports issued by independent commissions regarding Los Angeles police and Sheriff's Department practices cite rampant, institutional class and racial discrimination by police.

Gang member identification becomes part of an individual's permanent criminal record information. Gang member identification forms a basis for prosecution under federal and state Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) laws. Criminal Street Gang membership can form the basis for adding an extra ten years to sentences for certain offenses. It can be introduced, subject to a showing of relevancy, as an aggravating factor favoring imposition of the death penalty. Gang member status can also operate as justification for administrative segregation (lockdown), plus denial of access to rehabilitative programs and parole during incarceration.

To be continued...



Commemorator photo

Boots, with members of the Coup at a CCBPP talent show held in Berkeley, CA in 1991. Neico Slater holds a Coup album poster.

Artist Corner: Boots Speaks

Continued from page 18

act like they are liberal and are for you, but really have interests that are just the same as everyone else who benefits from the status quo. Part of what we are not seeing out here is that there were millions and millions of dollars spent on the Yes on 21 Campaign, but they just did not put out commercials in the Bay Area because they figured they didn't need to. They put out commercials in LA and Orange County where you'd see it on TV all the time.

The other thing that they did was on the voting ballot, it did not explain what Prop 21 was. It just said "extend the sentences for rapists and murderers," or whatever. So, somebody who didn't know about it would have been, like, OK, yes, or something like that. I also disagreed with the campaign slogan that the group California for Justice used: "We'll be spending more money on prison." People (right wingers) who think that prisons are good, they want their money spent on things like this. It's not like that is an argument for them.

COMMEMORATOR: In your view, what do you think the future looks like for young people, for African-American youth? What needs to be done?

BOOTS: I think that we need to do some campaigns that have to do with money issues, like rent and wages. It would be good to see a fast-food worker campaign or union going on where people actually participate in a strike against MacDonald's in certain areas. It's not like a factory, where they can just up and move to Mexico. Their whole thing in making money is where they are located at. There are companies that are in the Black community that could be paying $15, or more, an hour, such as MacDonalds, or K-Mart, or whatever. So that people see the Movement as here and now, as opposed to seeing the movement as raising consciousness, or whatever.

Because I think consciousness gets raised in how you struggle for what you are struggling for. The idea is not necessarily to keep people from hustling in order to pay their bills, but to get people to hustle to pay the bill in a different way, where people can merge with the larger movement.

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CCBPP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) is committed to the goals of the Black Panther Party (BPP) as outlined in its Ten-Point Program which was written in 1966 by Party founders, Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.

The Ten-Point Program outlines goals and objectives toward changing conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression in all low-income and working class communities in the U.S. and elsewhere, as the basis for unity and solidarity.

Also, the CCBPP is committed to the concept of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, introduced by Dr. Newton in 1970 at Boston College. Our Revolutionary Intercommunalism holds that there are basically two sides. On one side there is reactionary intercommunalism which presently holds the world's low-income and working communities under conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression by controlling the wealth, resources and institutions in order to maximize profits for the few. Huey identified this side as the leading reactionary side (the ruling class) which consists of a minority, fewer than five percent of the world population. Under these conditions, reactionary intercommunalism, by and large, keeps the poor and working communities on a cycle of degradation, under conditions of reaction, desperation and poverty, with no end in sight. Newton understood that in order to change these conditions and advance the economic and cultural interests of these oppressed communities of the world, disciplined organizations must be built from the bottom up, enabling these low-income and working communities to fight exploitation and oppression by any means necessary (this fight needs to start in the advanced industrialized U.S. because our nation leads the world in political reaction and economic exploitation).

CCBPP advances and upholds the goals which the BPP outlined in its Ten-Point Program, and those goals are about ridding black ghettos and low-income and working communities of economic exploitation and political oppression, understanding that we can reach these goals only by seizing the time at the point of practice.

Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM, WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

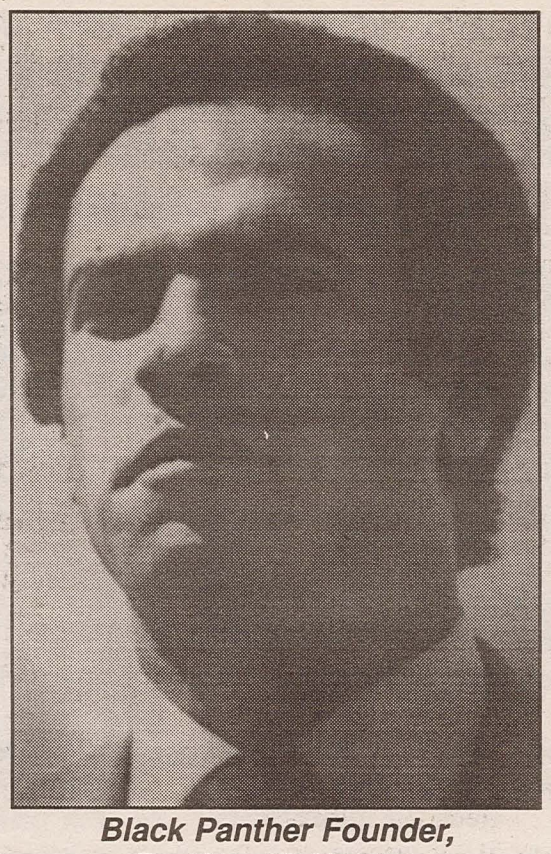
3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people on our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illnesses, most of which have come about as a result of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it is our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. We believe that the various conflicts which exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND POOR OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism. It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

N'COBRA

Prepares to Sue United States Government

N'COBRA Litigation Committee prepares the final pieces of a class-action lawsuit for Reparations on behalf of African (American) People in the United States.

At the recent N'COBRA 9th Annual Convention in Washington D.C., the Litigation Team recommended four major areas for the lawsuit: **WEALTH/POVERTY, EDUCATION, CRIMINAL PUNISHMENT**, and **PEOPLE/NATIONHOOD.**

UPDATE: N'COBRA'S efforts in Chicago, Illinois took a quantum leap forward on May 18th, 2000, when the Chicago City Council voted 46-1 in favor of a resolution urging Congress to consider U.S. Rep John Conyers' (H.R. 40) bill. Resolutions have also been passed in Detroit, Dallas, Cleveland and Washington, D.C.

"Power concedes nothing without a demand," Frederick Douglass

S103 **CONGRESS** **H.R.40**

1st Session

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 5, 1993

Mr. Conyers introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

A BILL

To acknowledge the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to examine the institution of slavery, subsequent *de jure* and *de facto* racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies and for other purposes.

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For local information and how you can become active in the N'COBRA Movement for REPARATIONS in your areas contact Bay Area N'COBRA activist, Adamah Oshuntoki Mosley (510) 8324-9004), DO FOR SELF BOOK STORE, Oakland, CA. Many thanks to Brother Jaharhara H. Armstrong and family for working so hard in the Bay Area for his people who attended the last N'COBRA Convention in Washington D.C. last June! PEACE AND BLESSING. ADAMAH OSHUNTOKI MOSLEY.

Local Coordinator: Tyrrah Alafia Young (510)-237-2369

If you have Reparation news or ideas please send to: Adamah Mosley @ Juno.com or any of the above sites as well.

Mail this bottom portion to the National Office N'COBRA,
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